PASSING EVENTS
AT HOME AND ABROAD.

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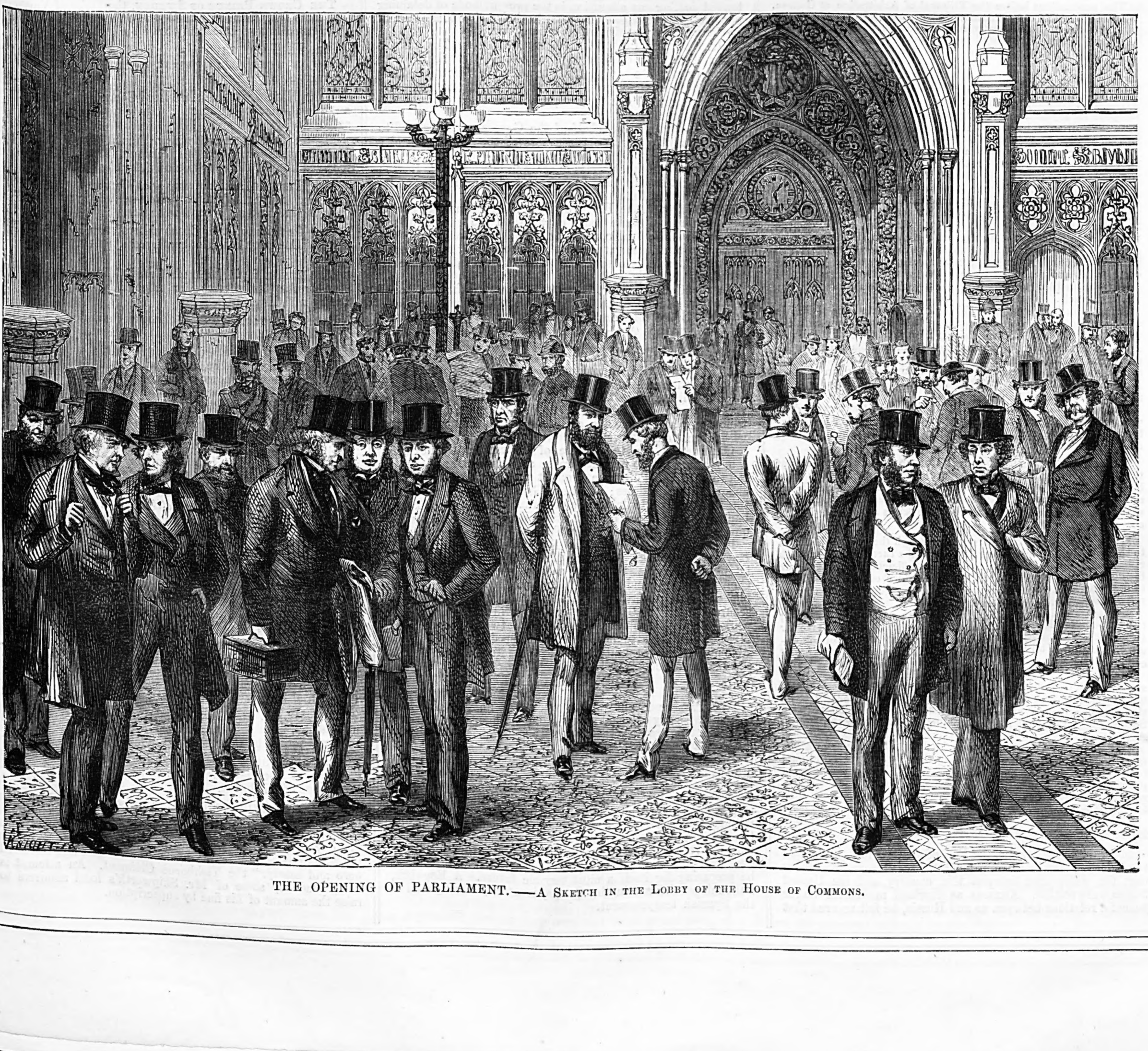
THE HOUSE OF COMMONS' LOBBY.

Startling as the assertion may seem, it is nevertheless true that it is almost as difficult for an ordinary Englishman to see anything of the inner life of Parliament as it used to be for a Christian in Turkey to enter a Mahommedan mosque. Formerly there was a spot open to the public where they could gaze upon the approaches to the great Council Chamber of the nation, and that spot was the Lobby of the House of Commons. Till within the last three or four years, so long as an individual was decently dressed, and not known as a pickpocket to the policemen guarding the doorways, he could stroll into the Lobby unrebuked, and watch the representatives of the people as they passed to and fro between the House and the outer world. But now-a-days, thanks to a reformed Parliament whose first act was to abolish the privilege, this is altered, and some aid is required in order to cross the portal.

At the entrance of the passage leading to the Lobby from the central hall are stationed three policemen. Unless you are a member or one of the small clique of clerks, editors, secretaries, and agents who have the right of entry, these janitors will civilly but peremptorily deny you admission. Your only chance is to waylay a member, if you happen to be sufficiently intimate with one to venture upon such a proceeding, and get him to pass you in. In this case he takes you by the arm, the blue-coated guardians fall back, and, passing through a narrow passage, you find yourself in the Lobby of the House of Commons.

This, as may be seen from our engraving, is simply a large rectangular porch-shaped hall, with a high vaulted roof, and entrances placed in the centre of each of the four walls. The north door is the entrance from the outer world; the west leads to the members' cloak-room, the east to the refreshment-rooms; whilst the south is the portal of the House of Commons itself. On either side of this doorway are sentry-boxes of stuffed leather, in which two elderly gentlemen, in black suits with white ties, sit encased. Ornamental, if not useful, they at least give an air of dignity to the approaches of the House, to which its members can hardly be said to contribute by *their* outward appearance; for it must be confessed that they are not imposing, middle-aged men for the most part, apt to be bald about the head, not very slim in the waist, wrinkled about the face, and somewhat slovenly in dress: they look very like the sort of gentlemen who come up to the City in the morning in suburban omnibuses.



THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT.—A Sketch in the Lobby of the House of Commons.

The Ministers and the great leaders of the House are not much given to loitering in the Lobby. The Premier passes through with his quick, restless step, and Disraeli saunters in with the careless and almost languid gait he affects. But they dare not make any long stay, for they would be so beset by questioners that they would find it difficult to get clear again. But the minor celebrities of the House delight in the Lobby. Even in spite of the barriers which have been erected to keep it sacred to Memberdom, there is still a public there before which they can make their appearance. Newly-elected members, in the first flush of their position, frequently manage to get in a batch of admiring constituents, to whom they point out the various celebrities. But suddenly a bell rings—the signal for a division—and the members scuttle back into the House like rabbits into their burrows, and the strangers take their departure, marvelling, perhaps, at the difficulties placed in the way of the public getting within speaking distance of their own representatives.

IN PARLIAMENT.

The fifth session of the eighth Parliament of the present reign was opened on Thursday, the 6th inst., with the usual ceremony in both Houses, but as little excitement outside as can well be imagined. There was but a very small attendance of peers. The Strangers' Gallery was well filled, and one or two foreign uniforms brightened up the nearly empty gallery allotted to distinguished visitors, General Schenck, the Japanese Ambassador, and a Persian officer being present. On the arrival of the Speaker of the House of Commons, who was accompanied by a large number of members, the clerk at the table read the royal writ summoning the Parliament. The Lord Chancellor, who with the other royal commissioners, sat on a cross-bench near the woolsack, then proceeded to read

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

My Lords and Gentlemen,—I greet you cordially on your reassembling for the discharge of your momentous duties.

I have the satisfaction of maintaining relations of friendship with Foreign Powers throughout the world.

You were informed when I last addressed you that steps had been taken to prepare the way for dealing more effectually with the Slave Trade on the East Coast of Africa. I have now despatched an Envoy to Zanzibar, furnished with such instructions as appear to me best adapted for the attainment of the object in view. He has recently reached the place of his destination, and has entered into communication with the Sultan.

My ally the German Emperor, who had undertaken to pronounce judgment as arbiter on the line of water-boundary so long in dispute under the terms of the Treaty of 1846, has decided, in conformity with the contention of the Government of the United States, that the Haro Channel presents the line most in accordance with the true interpretation of that Treaty. I have thought it the course most befitting the spirit of international friendship and the dignity of the country to give immediate execution to the award by withdrawing promptly from my partial occupation of the Island of San Juan.

The proceedings before the Tribunal of Arbitration at Geneva, which I was enabled to prosecute in consequence of the exclusion of the Indirect Claims preferred on behalf of the Government of the United States, terminated in an award which in part established and in part repelled the claims allowed to be relevant. You will in due course be asked to provide for the payment of the sum coming due to the United States under this award. My acknowledgments are due to the German Emperor, and likewise to the Tribunal at Geneva, for the pains and care bestowed by them on the peaceful adjustment of controversies such as could not but impede the full prevalence of national goodwill in a case where it was especially to be cherished.

In further prosecution of a well-understood and established policy, I have concluded a Treaty for the Extradition of Criminals with my ally the King of the Belgians.

The Government of France has, during the recess, renewed its communications with my Government for the purpose of concluding a Commercial Treaty to replace that of 1860, which is about to expire. In prosecuting these communications, I have kept in view the double object of an equitable regard to existing circumstances, and of securing a general provision more permanent in its character, and resting on a reciprocal and equal basis, for the commercial and maritime transactions of the two countries. I hope to be enabled, within a very short period, to announce to you the final result.

It has been for some years felt by the Governments of Russia and the United Kingdom respectively, that it would be conducive to the tranquillity of Central Asia, if the two Governments should arrive at an identity of view regarding the line which describes the northern frontier of the dominions of Affghanistan. Accordingly a correspondence has passed, of which this is the main subject. Its tenour, no less than its object, will, I trust, be approved by the public opinion of both nations.

Papers will be laid before you with relation to the awards delivered under the Treaty of Washington, to the commercial negotiations with France, and to the northern frontier of the dominions of Affghanistan.

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,—The estimates of the coming financial year will be presented to you. They have been framed with a view to the efficiency and moderation of our establishments, under circumstances of inconvenience entailed by variations of an exceptional nature in the prices of some important commodities.

My Lords and Gentlemen,—Although the harvest has been to some extent deficient, the condition of the three Kingdoms with reference to Trade and Commerce, to the sufficiency of the Revenue for meeting the public charge, to the decrease of pauperism, and to the relative amount of ordinary crime, may be pronounced generally satisfactory.

A measure will be submitted to you on an early day for settling the question of University Education in Ireland. It will have for its object the advancement of learning in that portion of my dominions, and will be framed with a careful regard to the rights of conscience.

You will find ample occupation in dealing with other legislative subjects of importance which, for the most part, have already been under your notice in various forms and at different periods. Among these your attention will speedily be asked to the formation of a Supreme Court of Judicature, including provisions for the trial of Appeals.

Among the measures which will be brought before you there will also be proposals for facilitating the Transfer of Land, and for the amendment of our system of Local Taxation, of certain provisions of the Education Act of 1870, and of the General Acts regulating Railways and Canals; together with various other Bills for the improvement of the Law.

I earnestly commend your deliberations to the guidance and favour of Almighty God.

In the House of Lords, the Earl of Clarendon, in moving the Address, said he thought it matter for sincere satisfaction that the differences between this country and the United States were settled. Anxious as England must ever be for peaceful relations between us and Russia, he felt assured that the line of policy pursued by the noble Earl the Minister for Foreign Affairs would prove ultimately in the best interests of England. He earnestly hoped that a Roman Catholic endowment would form no part of the Irish Education scheme.

Lord Monteagle seconded the Address.

The Earl of Derby cautioned the Government against entertaining the idea of extending our Indian frontiers either to the north or the west, criticised the manner in which the American question had been settled, and deprecated the expedient of inventing new rules of international law for the purpose of facilitating the absolute surrender which had been brought about.

Earl Granville contended that her Majesty's Government had done no more than was necessary in respect to the carrying out of the principle of arbitration upon the American question. The Central Asian question was merely a matter of long-pending arrangements that were by no means likely to occasion complications with the Russian Government.

The Duke of Richmond objected to the one-sided nature of the compromise which had been effected in the case of the American claims, expressed his regret that the progress of the army reorganization scheme had not been referred to in the Queen's Speech, and doubted the ability of the Government to deal satisfactorily with the question of Irish education.

The motion was then agreed to, and their lordships adjourned at five minutes past nine o'clock.

In the House of Commons, the Speaker having read the Queen's Speech, the Address in reply thereto was moved by the Hon. C. G. Lyttelton and seconded by Mr. Stone.

Mr. Disraeli remarked upon the circumstance that the Speech contained ten paragraphs on the subject of our external relations and five on topics of domestic policy. He expressed a hope that this was not ominous, and that foreign subjects would not occupy too great a share in the debates of the session. Gently reminding the House that it had to perform the duties of a senate as well as those of a vestry, the right hon. gentleman proceeded to criticise the paragraph relating to the question of Irish education. The right hon. gentleman then entered into a lengthened review of the *Alabama* negotiations, criticising severely the action of the Government in connection therewith. After briefly referring to the other points of the Speech, the right hon. gentleman quoted its concluding words commending the deliberations of the House to the care and guidance of the Almighty, for, said he, they never required them more than at the present time.

Mr. Gladstone expressed his condolence with Mr. Disraeli in the personal loss he had sustained, and his pleasure at seeing the right hon. gentleman again in his place. He then proceeded to answer in detail the points which had been raised in the course of the debate.

On Friday, the House of Lords were entirely engrossed by a long discussion about the unfortunate *Northfleet*, involving the question of extradition treaties, whereby those guilty of her loss would be brought to justice.

In the House of Commons, Mr. Bruce was asked if he intended making any alteration in the present mode of detaining persons charged with crime prior to their being committed or discharged after inquiry before a magistrate?

Mr. Bruce said that the rules for the treatment of persons detained in such cases were framed by the justices. The Secretary of State had no power to initiate any new rules, but the justices, having regard to recent events, would, no doubt, examine the rules now in force, and alter them where it was considered necessary.

Mr. Gladstone, on behalf of the Government, declined to institute any inquiry into the causes of the present scarcity of coal.

The report on the Address in reply to her Majesty's Speech was brought up by Mr. Lyttelton, and the motion for its adoption agreed to.

On Monday, in the House of Peers, Lord Belmore moved for returns, and made some remarks, on the subject of the South Sea slave traffic, and Lord Kimberley, promising the desired information, gave somewhat encouraging reports as to the results already obtained by Government interference to put down the trade.

In the Commons, Mr. Disraeli intimated that he would move the rejection of the Burials Bill on its second reading; and Mr. Bruce laid on the table the new rules under the Parks Regulation Act—leading to a somewhat confused, but highly animated, discussion, in which Mr. Rylands, Mr. B. Osborne, and Mr. Vernon Harcourt were especially severe on Mr. Ayrton. The discussion led to no immediate result, though it showed how much latent feeling exists in the House on this delicate subject. By a majority of 148 to 78 the Government re-enacted the rule adopted last year, in virtue of which they are enabled to go into supply on Monday nights without motions intervening.

On Tuesday, in the House of Peers, Lord Buckhurst brought in a Bill to regulate traffic and prevent accidents on railways; Lord Poltimore brought up the Queen's gracious answer to the Address; and Lord Granville, on a question by the Earl of Lauderdale, gave assurance that the San Juan boundary would now be indubitably determined, in a manner quite different from that of the Treaty of 1846.

In the Commons, Lord Otho Fitzgerald communicated the Royal reply to the Address; Mr. Miall gave notice of his intention to move that for certain specified reasons the Churches of England and Scotland should cease to be established by law; Lord John Manners made a futile attempt to secure a holiday on Tuesday evenings, by limiting the House's work on that day to the hours between two and seven; and Mr. Forster, after some desultory discussion, obtained the appointment of a committee to inquire into the operation of the Endowed Schools Act.

The Passing Event of the week has undoubtedly been the passing away of regal power from the hands of Amadeus of Spain. The reasons that induced a monarch whose position, if somewhat unsettled, was certainly not more precarious than it has already been on several prior occasions, to resign are not easily fathomed. His public statement, of course, may have a good foundation, but occult influences are to be suspected, and personal pique arising out of the affair of the artillery officers has no doubt something to do with it. It is with grief that we behold the hand of Amadeus relinquishing the helm of the ship of state, for he was certainly inspired with the very best intentions towards the unfortunate country over which he was called to govern, and which now seems to be preparing for itself a most terrible future. A Republic, although proclaimed in the Cortes, is utterly uncongenial to the Spanish temperament.

PERSONAL.

The Queen of Saxony is seriously ill with bronchitis.

Madlle. Tietjens has quite recovered.

It is believed Serjeant Armstrong will be the Irish Solicitor-General

Mr. Joseph Arch is making a tour through Warwickshire advising the farm labourers, if possible, to avoid strikes.

Prince Arthur, it is rumoured in India, will visit that country next winter.

Miss Eliza Capel, the sister of Monsignor Capel, is to be married to a London solicitor.

M. Thiers has definitely declined to be present at the Vienna Exhibition.

Viscount Ossington is reported to be much better, and is now considered out of danger.

The Empress Charlotte of Mexico is reported to be in a most critical state of health.

Lord Neaves was installed Rector of St. Andrew's University on the afternoon of Thursday, the 6th inst.

Sir Anthony Panizzi, who has been seriously ill, is somewhat better.

MM. Rouher and Pietri have arrived in Paris from London.

The Lord Mayor has been made a member of the Judicature Commission.

Mr. Bellew's first appearance before an American audience has been attended with the most complete success.

The Lord Chief Justice of England, having declined a peerage, has accepted the Grand Cross of the Bath.

M. Emilio Castelar, the well known Spanish Radical Deputy and orator, has arrived in Paris.

Cardinal Cullen has been confined to his room for some days with a severe cold, but is now improving.

Mr. Arthur Taylor has been elected Chairman of the City Library.

M. Michel Levy, the well-known publisher, has just received the decoration of the Legion of Honour.

Frederic Lemaitre, who is nearly eighty years old, has been obliged to open an elocution class in order to obtain the necessary means of living.

Baron Haussmann, the famous Prefect of the Seine, who built Imperial Paris, has gone to Constantinople to engage in some financial enterprise.

Mr. Lumley and Mr. Erskine, who represent England respectively at Brussels and Athens, have been made Companions of the Bath.

A continued improvement is reported in the health of the Rev. Dr. Pusey, who, however, will remain at Genoa the rest of the winter.

The Crown Prince of Sweden, the Duke of Vermeland, has had a fall, through which the infirmity of which he had been cured lately in Germany has appeared again.

Mr. H. Labouchere has intimated his intention to come forward as a candidate for the representation of Southwark at the next election.

Lord Hatherley, the late Lord Chancellor, has undergone an operation for cataract. His lordship is progressing satisfactorily.

M. de Corcelles, the new French Ambassador to the Holy See, has presented his credentials to the Pope, who received him for that purpose on Saturday last.

Mr. Harding, senior wrangler at Cambridge this year, has been declared Smith's first prizeman, while the second has gone to Mr. Nanson, second wrangler.

The freedom of the Coachmakers' and Coach Harness-makers' Company has been conferred upon the Duke of Edinburgh.

M. Ozenne is to be made Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour for his services in negotiating the Commercial Treaty with England.

Baron Crofton has been chosen by a majority of votes to succeed the late Baron Clarina in the House of Lords as a temporal Peer of Ireland.

In conequence of the death of Viscountess Beaconsfield, Mr. Disraeli's well-known residence in Grosvenor-gate has to be vacated by him. He will take up his quarters for the session at Edwards's Hotel, Hanover-square.

Paul May, the survivor of the wretched Chelsea tragedy, has been sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment, at Berlin, for forgery and robbery on his employers; fully admitting his guilt, but seeming "neither ashamed nor repentant."

M. Alphonso Millaud, son of the late M. Polydore Millaud, who founded the *Petit Journal*, has been arrested, and the papers say the charge refers to a deficit of about 200,000*l*., complained of by the banking customers of his late father.

Father O'Keefe announced to his congregation on Sunday that his case would be brought before the House of Lords within the next three weeks by the late Lord Chancellor of England, and before the House of Commons by Mr. Bouverie.

The Empress Eugénie left Camden House on Saturday for the first time since the death of the Emperor, and attended early mass at the Roman Catholic Chapel of St. Mary, Chislehurst. The Prince Louis Napoleon returned from Woolwich on Saturday, and it is understood will remain at Chislehurst for a fortnight.

The Rev. H. R. Nevill, of Great Yarmouth, will, it is understood, be appointed to the canonry in Norwich Cathedral, rendered vacant by the death of the late Professor Sedgwick.

Prince Napoleon has arrived in Rome, and has already had several interviews with his father-in-law, the King, and the Prince of Piedmont.

Mr. G. B. Skipworth, the imprisoned friend of the Claimant, has addressed a letter to his fellow-townsmen at Caistor, Lincolnshire, saying that he thanks God he feels his first day in prison to be "the happiest and proudest of his life," and glories in what he has done for "that noble-hearted hero and martyr" the Tichborne Claimant. An attempt is being made by some of Mr. Skipworth's local admirers to raise the amount of his fine by supscription.

AT HOME.

On Saturday last a Cabinet Council was held in Downing-street, at which all the Ministers were present.

A Hansom cab to carry four passengers has been introduced in Leeds.

Mr. Goschen is about to restore the rank of Major to the Royal Marines.

The running down, outside the Humber, of a French lugger by a Grimsby fishing smack is reported, and the crew of the former, numbering ten or twelve, were drowned.

At Manchester, two female factory operatives have been sent to prison for seven days for having intimidated another girl who would not turn out with them on strike.

On the 18th inst., the extensive cotton-mill of Mr. Robert Fitton, near Oldham, was destroyed by fire, the carding-room, which was fireproof, being alone saved. About 100 people will be thrown out of work.

At Oxford, it is rumoured that, notwithstanding the protests of the University, the War Office has determined on making Oxford a military centre, and that Bullingdon is the locality fixed upon.

On Friday morning, the 7th inst., a punt belonging to the Ramsgate lugger, *Champion*, capsized, while taking off a pilot to a barque in the Downs, and three out of five men in her were drowned. Tow of them leave families.

A tender for the erection of the new Natural History Museum at South Kensington, on the site of the Exhibition of 1862, has been accepted by the Government. The amount of the contract is 400,000*l*., and work is to be begun at once.

The rumour that the Oxonians are desirous of abandoning the annual race is, we learn from good authority, entirely groundless. The race will undoubtedly take place early in April, but the exact fixture is a matter for arrangement.

The Council of the South Yorkshire Miners' Association, representing 15,000 colliers, have made a grant of £250 towards the relief of the men on strike in South Wales, and £50 to the colliers in Lanarkshire.

On Monday the Duchess of Teck performed the ceremony of opening the new school buildings in connection with St. James's, Bermondsey, in the presence of an immense concourse of people.

The snowstorms in the north of Scotland continue with unabated severity, and the deer have descended in great numbers from exposed situations to places where their food is stored.

Two of the *Coquette* class of unarmoured iron composite gun-vessels have been launched from Chatham dockyard. They are named the *Ariel* and *Zephyr*, and will carry four guns each of heavy calibre.

A woman named Boyce threw herself into the Liffey at midnight on Saturday last, but was rescued by a young man named Dowling. She had upon her at the time £6,000 in bank notes and securities.

A number of workmen are now engaged in constructing a short tunnel on the Bray Head section of the Wicklow Railway. A quantity of blasting powder recently exploded prematurely, and severely injured one of the workmen, who lies in a precarious condition.

While a steam traction-engine was passing, on Tuesday afternoon, over a bridge which crosses a backwater of the river Ivel, near the village of Broom, the bridge gave way. The driver was killed, the engine falling upon him in the deep water. The stoker was severely hurt, but not killed.

The Spanish Consul at Liverpool, on Tuesday, offered a reward to any person who would communicate to him such information as would lead to the discovery of shipments or remittances of arms and ammunition for the insurrectionists in Spain or her colonies.

Severe punishment has been dealt out by the Board of Trinity College to the students who took part in a recent snowballing disturbance. Mr. Ross has forfeited a valuable exhibition and his chambers; one medical student has been condemned to lose a year; others to undergo extra examinations; while others again are ordered to pay heavy fines.

The ceremony of freeing Kew-bridge from toll took place last Saturday afternoon. Great crowds flocked from Brentford, Richmond, Kew, and Hammersmith to the spot. The bridge was gaily decorated, there being a beautiful arch of evergreens on the Middlesex side. The bridge was declared open amidst a salute of guns.

A meeting on behalf of the imprisoned gas stokers was held on Saturday, the 8th inst., when a statement was read by one of the men employed at Beckton, denying that four of those who were sentenced to a year's imprisonment were either ringleaders or promoters of the strike. The sum received for the support of the men's families is £276, which is said to be sufficient.

Although the distresss is terrible, and is daily increasing, there is not a sign among the Merthyr colliers of a disposition to accept the double shift. It is, however, very probable that if an employer like Mr. Crawshay were to say to his iron-workers, "I have plenty of fuel for you, if you are inclined to resume work," they would do as Mr. Brogden's men have done, and go in on the reduction.

During the heavy weather of Sunday morning the Italian barque *Alevezia*, of Genoa, from Shields for Civita Vecchia, struck on Hasborough Sands, and remained fast. A furious sea was running over the sands, but the crew managed with great difficulty to lower their boat and get clear of the vessel, which was rapidly destroyed. The men, twelve in number, succeeded in landing at Palling, but lost everything they possessed.

The much-talked-of railway sleeping carriage constructed for the North British Railway Company was used for the first time on Monday in the express from Edinburgh to London. The carriage was occupied by a large party. At Berwick the hindmost axle was found so greatly heated that it was considered unsafe for the carriage to proceed further. The occupants were therefore transferred to another carriage, and the sleeping carriage was left behind at Berwick.

An accident of a very serious character has occured to a trooper of the name of Hungar, of the Royal Horse Guards now stationed at Windsor. It appears, while out exercising with the regiment, when the horses began to trot, the one Trooper Hungar was on ran away and threw him with great force. He is in a very dangerous state. The same horse has run away with him several times before, and generally bolts when the horses of the regiment commence to trot.

Two boys, one a son of Mr. Hutton, joiner, and the other a son of Mr. Macdonald, Lord Abinger's overseer at Toolondy, were accidentally drowned on Monday evening while amusing themselves on the ice on the river Lundy. Mrs. Macdonald having missed her boy, went to look about the river, when she found him and the boy Hutton in the same hole in the ice. They were speedily taken out, but life was found to be extinct.

A fatal accident occurred on Tuesday, at a colliery near Bolton. Two men, named Southern and Mangnall, were engaged in "stripping" the pit when the rope supporting the scaffold on which they were standing broke, and both men were precipitated to the bottom of the pit, a distance of a hundred and twenty feet. Southern died in a few minutes, but, wonderful to say, Mangnall escaped with a few slight bruises.

On Friday morning, the 7th inst., a collision occurred on the London and North-Western Railway, near Chequerbent, resulting in the death of two men. An empty coal-train was proceding from Chequerbent to Atherton, when four waggons and a brake-van ran into the coal-train, and Thomas Sutton, banksider, and John Whitefield, brakesman, both of Atherton, were thrown on the line and instantly killed. Three waggons and the brake were smashed.

A small steamer (said to be loaded with machinery) went out on Saturday the 18th inst., from Ipswich, and as she passed through the harbour it was noticed that she was so low in the water that the sea broke over her even there. A strong breeze from the east was blowing, and there was a heavy sea outside, and when she got about a mile out she went down, and all her crew were drowned excepting two men, whose recovery is yet, we are told, doubtful, as they have suffered so much from the cold water.

Much disappointment was caused to the large crowd of persons who surrounded the doors of the Jersey Mercantile Bank on Monday morning in the expectation of cashing their notes, when they became aware of the notice issued by the committee of shareholders that business would not be resumed that day. Mr. Armstrong, the dismissed manager, left Jersey for France, taking the keys of the safes with him. The committee had the safes forcibly opened, and discovered that securities to a considerable amount were missing.

One of the gasometers at the Manchester Corporation Gas-works in Rochdale-road was destroyed by fire on Tuesday afternoon. The origin of the fire is not known, but about two o'clock a workman saw the flames issuing from one end of the gasometer. The corporation fire brigade were very quickly in attendance, but the flames could not be checked till the whole of the contents of the gasometer, about 600,000 cubic feet of gas, had been consumed. Many of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood hurried away with loads of their furniture, fearing an explosion, but nothing of the kind occurred.

The screw-steamer *Charles Howard*, of London, landed six of the crew of the steamship *Talisman* at Weymouth, on Monday, the latter having foundered off the coast of Lisbon on the 21st January. The rescued men state that fifteen of the crew were saved in two boats, and that twelve others, who had not the courage to jump into the sea, with the chance of being picked up by the boats, were lost with the ship. After tossing about for upwards of three hours in a rough sea, the boats were fortunately picked up by the schooner *Eugenie*, and the men were taken into Lisbon.

In the "Limerick Intelligence" of the *Cork Herald* we read the following item of news:—"The three and four-year-olds had a grand field-day at the last fair held in Kilteeyl. A most sanguinary fight is reported to have taken place there between the faction of the O'Neills and the O'Keeffes, and from the terrible hardness which their craniums have assumed consequent upon the long and bloody feuds stones were in many instances found to make such an inconceivable impression that hammers had to be used. A few men of the name of O'Keeffe and O'Neill are stated to be beyond mending." Pleasant for them, certainly."

The express from Edinburgh to London broke down on the 18th., inst between the East Linton and Dunbar stations, and the driver of a train which left East Linton five minutes after the express, being unable, owing to a curve in the line to see the signals given by the guard of the express until it was too late, ran into the express with such force as to shiver into fragments the guard's van of the latter, and wreck two out of the three compartments of the composite first and second-class carriage which was next to it. The engine of the parliamentary train had its progress arrested by being tilted up in the air, and the train behind it suffered very little damage. The driver and stoker jumped off before the collision, and only five persons were slightly hurt.

An inquest has been held at Blackburn relative to the death of Peter M'Grath, eight weeks old, who had died on the previous Thursday from the effects of narcotic poison. The mother of the child worked at a mill. She "farmed" the deceased during the day with a neighbour. She had purchased some cough medicine, which she had given to the deceased. The woman who nursed the child contradicted the evidence of the mother. The father admitted that that was the third inquest there had been on his children. The medical evidence went to prove that the deceased could not have died from natural causes. The jury returned a verdict of manslaughter against the mother, and she was committed to the assizes for trial.

An extraordinary attempted wife-murder has just been brought to light in Edinburgh. A husband and wife residing in the North disagreed, and the wife came to Edinburgh. On the 6th inst. a letter reached the wife purporting to be from her mother, intimating that her box and clothes would be forwarded to her per the North British Railway. The box was duly received, and, on its being opened, it was found to contain a large quantity of gunpowder, broken glass, and iron. A loaded pistol, with the trigger at full cock, and pointing upwards, was so set that when the lid opened the weapon should explode. Fortunately, however, the lid was slit in two parts, and the part which was first raised was not attached to the trigger, so that no explosion took place. The police are investigating the matter.

A meeting convened by the High Sheriff of Leitrim, in favour of a proposed railway from Sligo to Enniskillen, was forcibly prevented on Monday. The meeting was to be held in Manor Hamilton Court-house; but when the sheriff and his supporters arrived they were met by an armed mob, who would not let them pass. The sheriff and his party were obliged to return, and abandoned the meeting; but afterwards some of the leaders of the mob informed the sheriff that the way was now clear. The sheriff accordingly proceeded to the court-house, where he was admitted. The mob immediately rushed in, kept out the promoter of the project, and passed a resolution condemning it. The sheriff's party felt very indignant, and rioting was narrowly averted.

An extraordinary scene was witnessed on Monday night in the school-room attached to the Methodist New Connection Chapel, Lever-street, Manchester, where the Rev. W. Hubbard attempted to deliver a lecture on "Nonconformity: its Principles and Development." The lecturer was received with great noise, which was continued and kept up to such an extent that his remarks could not be heard beyond the front seat. Mr. Hubbard appealed to the chairman to secure order, adding that "he knew the men who were present." The audience refused to hear the lecturer, who, amid a scene of great uproar, announced his intention to proceed with the lecture. A number of young men commenced to play "Rule Britannia" on tin whistles, and there was a general migration towards the doors.

Some time ago the curate of St. Giles's Church, Northampton, retired from active duty on the ground of ill-health. He went to reside at Melton Mowbray, in the adjoining county of Leicester, and a few days ago he was found sitting before a Bible, opened at the chapter in which the verse, "If thy right hand offend the," &c., occurs, with his right hand almost severed from the arm at the wrist. His right eye was also fearfully injured, as though he had made an attempt to probe it out. These self-inflicted injuries, which must have been the result of a religious frenzy, or grave mental debility, produced a serious effect on the health of the unfortunate sufferer, and at first it was not expected that he could recover. It is considered now, however, that by careful treatment he may do so.

On Wednesday, the 5th inst., Dr. Cumming was announced to deliver a lecture at the Town-hall at Folkestone, at three o'clock in the afternoon, on "The Pope and his Work in England." As he entered the hall, a telegram, just arrived from London, was presented to him. He at once proceeded to the platform, opened the telegram, and read it aloud. As far as the words could be caught they were:—"Private Telegram from Rome.—The Pope died at ten o'clock this morning." The effect cannot be described. Those present were confounded. The lecture was softened down into a mild and not very forcible reference to the solemn event which had been announced. The evening papers were sought for with avidity at all the libraries, and the whole population, including a large number of poor Irish, were greatly excited. Speculation is very busy as to the author of this hoax, which Dr. Cumming will have reason to remember for many a day."

At the German Consulate-General, on Monday, Dr. Hessel was presented with the testimonial raised to compensate him, as far as such means can avail, for the unfortunate error to which he became a victim. The funds collected amounted in all to nearly £1,200; and the earnest and simple proceedings culminated in Dr. Hessel's touching request that a share of the money along with a handsome silver cup, which formed part of the testimonial, should be sent to his sorely-afflicted father in Germany. It need hardly be said that Dr. Hessel's filial request was warmly approved by all present. His father is the pastor of Langenlonsheim, near Kreuznach. The cup, which is of classic form and design, will bear the inscription: "To Dr. Gottfried Hessel: a token of English sympathy and respect. London, January, 30th, 1873." The date is that of Dr. Hessel's release from detention, after the triumphant establishment of his innocence. It has been thought advisable that no direct reference to the extremely painful facts of his arrest and arraignment on a mistaken charge should form part of the inscription.

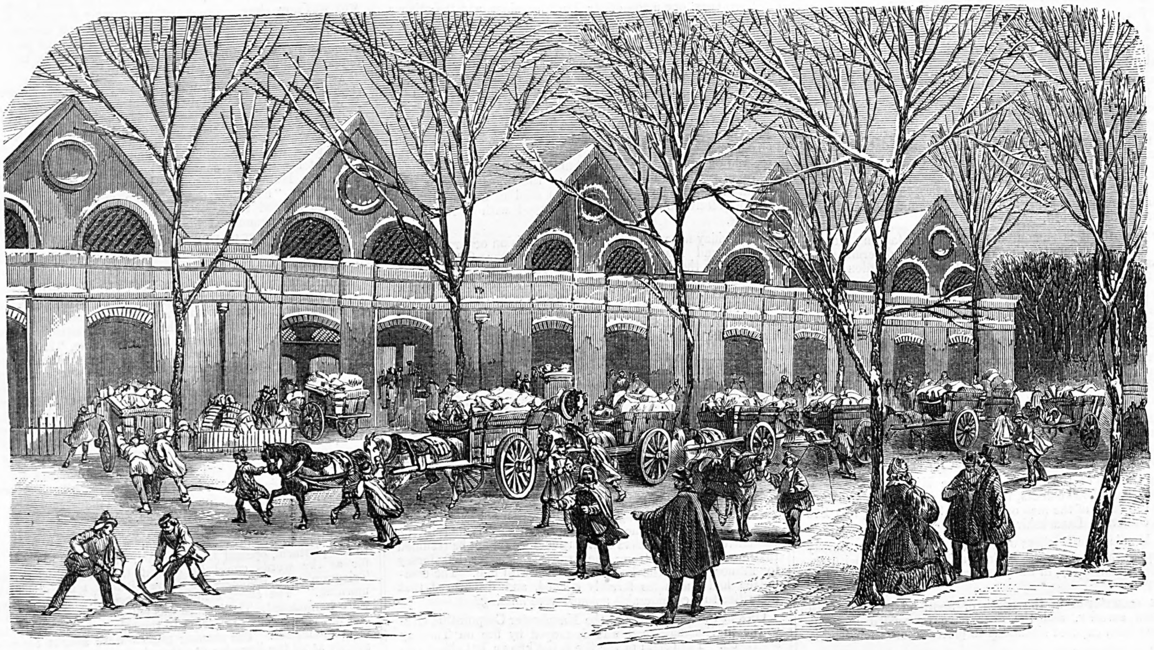
On Tuesday night, in St. James's Hall, a distinguished and remarkable artist bade farewell to the public of London. It has often to be said, as regards the musical profession, that "superfluous lags the veteran on the stage;" but Madame Arabella Goddard, reversing this order of things, makes her exit while in the prime of life and in the zenith of her powers. The reasons for this unusual course are not stated, and they can form no matter for speculation or discussion here; but the fact itself is one calling for sincere regret.

Advices received from Rome state it to be the Pope's intention to canonize Mary Queen of Scots.

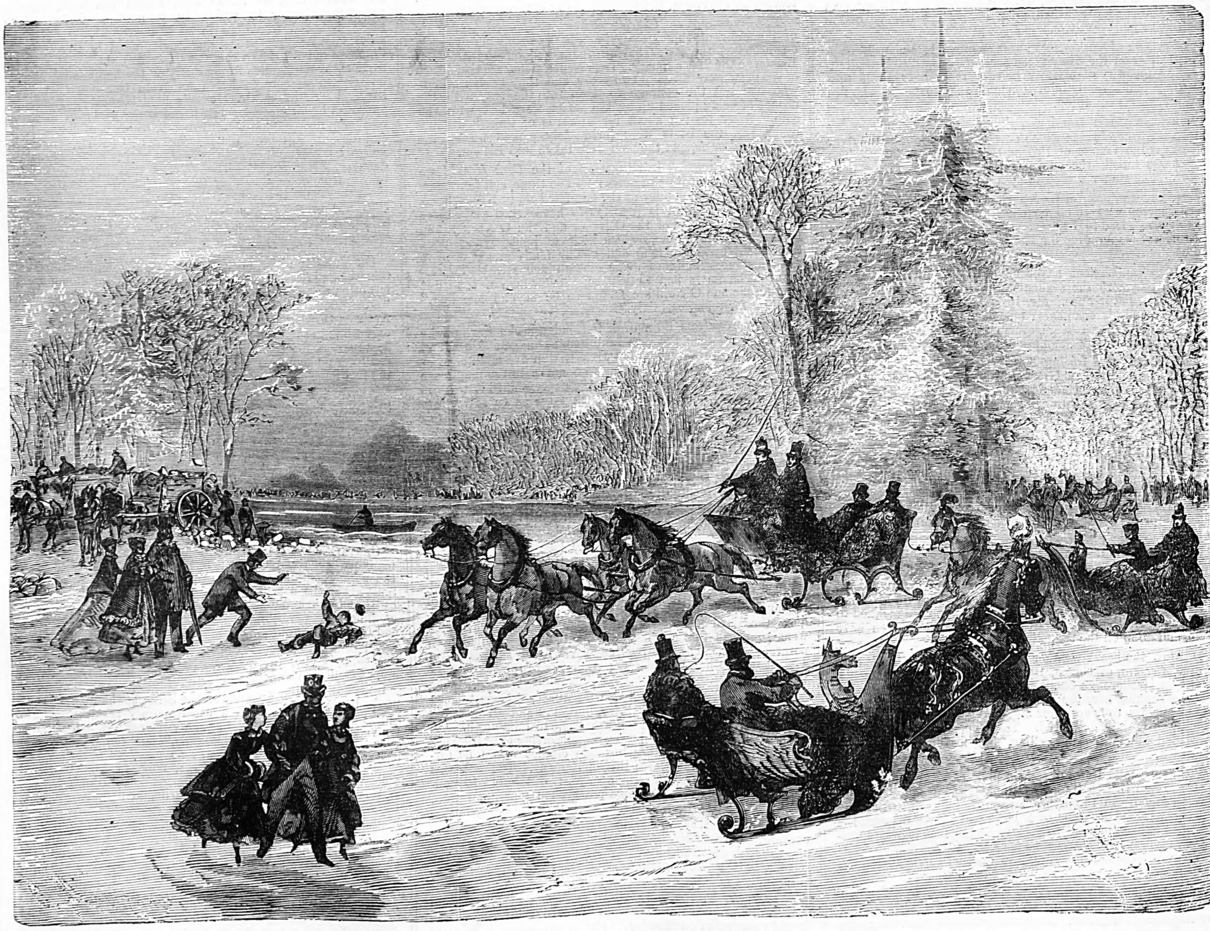
The New York practice of using a reflector and throwing a ray of rose-coloured light upon the bride's cheek as she passes up the aisle of the church, was sought to be introduced in San Francisco, but the man managing the reflector was a little nervous, and directed the rays upon the nose of the bridegroom, and the consequence was that those who assembled to witness the marriage—and were not in the secret—thought the bride was throwing herself away on a magnificent grog-blossomed nose.

Certain statistics have been prepared which show that in many parts of Ireland there is one grog shop to every forty of the population. Considering that amongst the forty there must always be a proportion of infants of tender years who can hardly suck much whiskey, the statement is almost incredible. However, there seems to be no mistake about it, and if there be none, some of Ireland's woes are explained. The publicans, it is presumed, must live, and if forty people can support one, the quantity of drink which each person must consume is something startling.

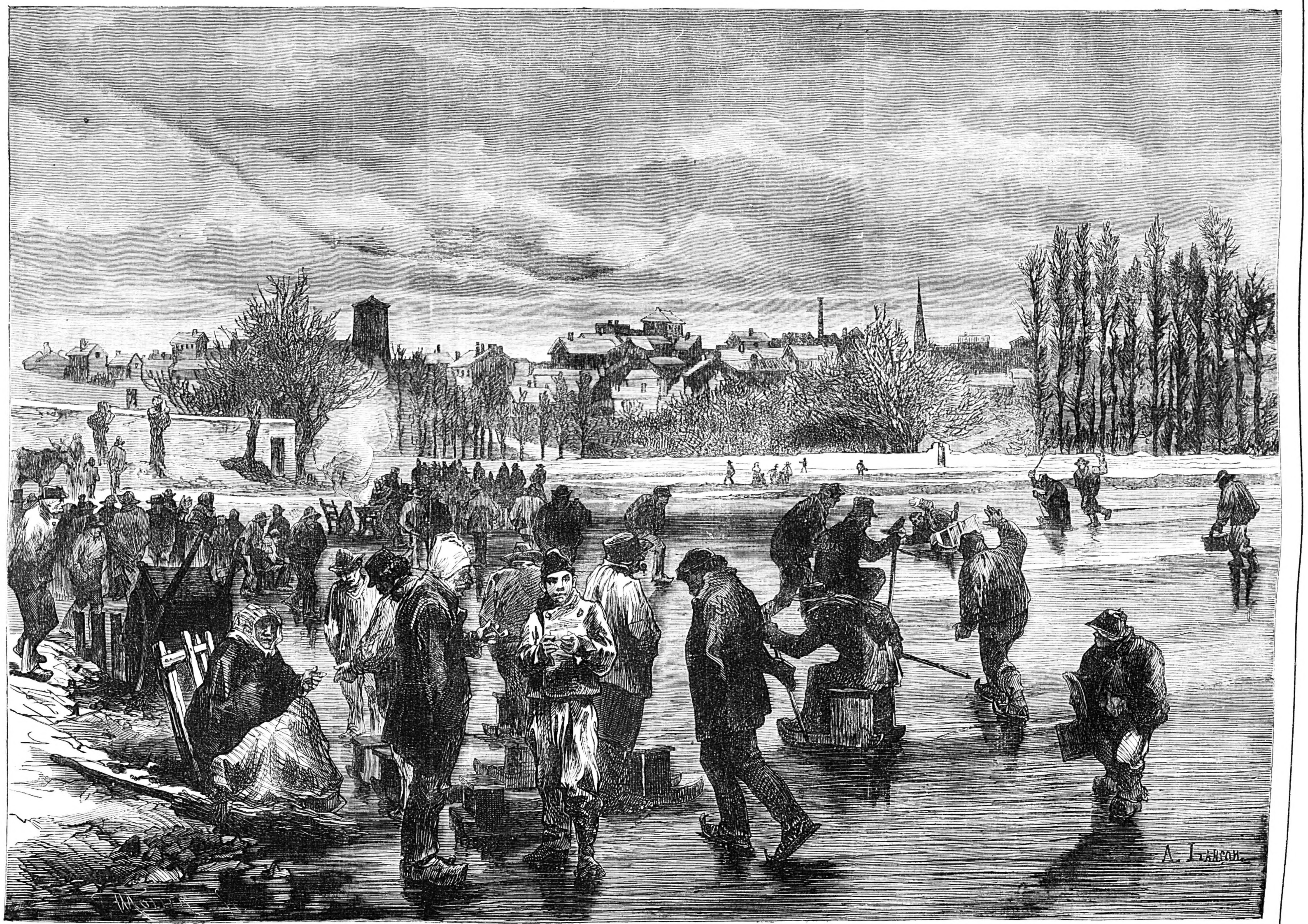
Concerning the working of the ballot at the recent Liverpool election a writer in a contemporary remarks:—"The aptest adjective I can find to qualify the contest, as compared with preceding ones, is "lethargic," but the lethargy was very much outside. There was no parading of streets by rowdies, no breaking of windows, none of the boisterous exuberance immortalized in "Pickwick" or "Handy Andy." It was no use kissing an elector's wife, or dandling an ugly baby, or laying a crisp £5-note on the counter in payment for an ounce of snuff. There was no tapping of beer-barrels, or sleeping on billiard-tables, or other artifices not unfamiliar to the good old times. The ballot, too, is a rank injustice to the shoulder-hitters. Let us be thankful for that at all events, whatever be our fears that it will ultimately lead to universal suffrage, biennial parliaments, and salaried senators as its logical sequence. There has been an absence of maltreatment of articles of wearing apparel, and a death of typographical abuse. To call a man "a Radical humbug," or "a weather politician," after all breaks no bones. The hatters and printers are the principal sufferers by the change."



THE ICE STORES OF THE BOIS DE BOULOGNE, NEAR PARIS.



SLEIGHING IN THE ENVIRONS OF VIENNA.



THE PARIS ICE-COLLECTORS.—A Sketch taken at the Reservoir.

ABROAD.

An extradition treaty between England and Italy was signed on the 5th inst. by Signor Visconti-Venosta and Sir Augustus Paget.

The Carlist leader Saballs has been repulsed in an attack made by him with a force of 500 men upon the garrison of Viladran, which is only 100 strong.

It is generally understood that M. Thiers does not intend that the trial of Marshal Bazaine shall take place at all, if he can help it.

On Saturday last, at the sitting of the Lower House of the Hungarian Diet, a resolution, energetically affirming the necessity for expelling the Jesuits from Hungary, was introduced, and ordered to be printed for regular discussion.

Austria has accepted the task of arbitrating on the Laurium Mines, and has received from the Governments interested documents containing the necessary information on the subject.

Serious news has been received in Lisbon from Loanda, where a native insurrection has broken out. A Ministerial Council has been held, at which it was resolved to despatch troops thither. Senhor Baptista Machado will leave also as Governor of Loanda, with plenipotentiary powers.

The French people have been much amused by an extract from the *Japan Mail* to the effect that the actors, jugglers, &c., are only to be allowed to perform for three years more, after which time they will have to seek a more honourable means of existence. Is this the Mikado's idea of civilization? the Mikado who has an embassy in Paris!

In connection with the arrests of persons accused of being affiliated to the Internationale, the court at Lisieux has sentenced nine persons to terms of imprisonment varying from eight months to fifteen days, besides fining them. Two of the prisoners are also placed under the surveillance of the police for five years.

Information has been received at Madras that on the night of Monday, December 15, a shock of earthquake took place, from the effects of which the people throughout the district safely escaped except in the town of Lehree, in Eastern Catchi and Zehri, where 500 lives have been lost from the fall of houses and walls; only twelve persons were saved.

The Mormons must look out. President Grant has, according to a telegram from New York, consulted with General Sheridan as to the best military positions around Salt Lake City. Troops have been ordered to be held in readiness from the Southern States for Utah. Brigham Young's organ counsels firmness even should martyrdom be the result.

A painful impression has been produced in the highest quarters in Prussia by Herr Lasker's exposures with regard to monetary irregularities—to use a mild term—in the disposal of railway concessions. Officials of high standing, and some illustrious noblemen, are said to be involved, and the place of at least one Cabinet Minister is expected to become vacant in consequence.

Florence witnessed an imposing ceremonial on Saturday last, when a solemn funeral mass for the late Emperor Napoleon was performed at the Church of Santa Croce. The official assemblage was of the most conspicuously representative character; and outside the church large bodies of regular troops and national guards were drawn up, while immense crowds braved the inclement weather to manifest their sympathy.

In the Spanish congress the debate on the reorganization of the army was brought to an end, and compulsory military service is thereby established. The Government has accepted the resignation of the artillery officers, some of whom have thrown up their commissions. The *matériel* of the artillery corps will be handed over to the new officers, who are to be appointed immediately.

Compulsory education begins to make way in Russia. The Provincial Assembly of Vladmir has asked to be authorized to apply compulsion to children of both sexes between the ages of eight and twelve years, in all the villages in which there are schools. The mode of enforcing the rule is to be the usual one of applying penalties against parents who do not send their children to school.

Additional letters from Warwickshire emigrants to Colonia Cananea, Brazil, corroborate previous reports as to the hardships and privations they have endured. The writers state that they are housed in hovels, three or four families together, and that their food is rice and fat. They have had no bread for four or beef for five months, and have not tasted mutton since they landed. Nearly all suffered from small-pox or fever, and several have died.

The Committee of Thirty in the French Chamber brought its labours to a close on Saturday last. It adopted the amendment of M. d'Haussonville, to the effect that the Council of Ministers should decide whether an interpellation required the participation of M. Thiers in the debate; and rejected the proposals presented by M. Dufaure on the 5th inst. The Duke de Broglie was elected reporter by 19 votes, against three recorded in favour of M. Grivart and one in favour of M. Batbie.

A shocking tragedy has been committed in one of the suburbs of the city of Strasburg. An *employé* in the railway office, the father of four children, on returning home one evening, went to bed earlier than usual, leaving his wife and the children downstairs. He was awoke about two o'clock in the morning by the cries of the youngest child, a boy of three years, and on getting up to see what was the matter discovered that his wife was not in the house. On entering another room he found his three eldest children in the agonies of death. An investigation showed that all had been poisoned. The youngest child was so ill that no hope was entertained of its recovery. The mother could nowhere be found, and it was presumed that she had carried out a previous threat of drowning herself.

A woman named Guéroult, living with her hnsband, a peasant, at St. Marguerite, near Aumale, has strangled him whilst asleep, and then suspended him so as to establish a suicide. She finally confessed the way she committed the crime, which was by using a sugar-loaf string, with which she made a noose, passed it gently over the neck of the man, who was fast asleep, and then pulled as hard as she could, as she said. Before doing the deed the rural "Lady Macbeth," knelt down to recite five "paters" and five "aves." The man and wife seemed to live rather happily together, so that the crime can only be attributed to the woman's desire to become the sole mistress of the conjugal property, between £200 and £300.

A sad case of depravity in horseflesh is reported by the Paris *Figaro*. The favourite horse of a certain baron fell seriously ill, and, though every care was taken of the animal, it rapidly grew worse, and began to show signs of sinking. As a last resource, the coachman, an American, suggested that two glasses of brandy with ginger should be administered every morning. The cure was most speedy; but ever since the horse, having been accustomed to stand at the door of a wine-shop to receive its matutinal beverage, now stops at every similar establishment it passes; and last week, angry at not being attended to, forced itself right through the window of a *marchand de liqueurs*. Such a thing could not have happened in England, for there is a clause in Mr. Bruce's Licensing Bill expressly forbidding this proceeding.

The Inspector-General of Police, Madras, has called the attention of Government to the practice prevailing in the Presidency of natives mortgaging and selling their wives and daughters. He states that in Nellore, the Yercalls, or Telegu Koravers, pledge their daughters to creditors, who may either marry them or give them away. In North Arcot, Koravers mortgage unmarried daughters, who become the absolute property of the mortgagee till the debt is discharged. In Chingleput, the practice of mortgaging the wives exists among the Salt Koravers. In Tanjore it is common. Male children become the property of the mortgagee, females that of the husband of the woman pledged. In Madras they sell the wife for 50 rs. outright, and the husband can never reclaim her. The Government, in reply, have called upon the collectors of the different districts mentioned to take steps to put down this picturesque but irregular practice.

The following reports tell their own story:—Malta, December, 30.—Ten seamen, being two-thirds of the crew of the *Acadia*, of South Shields (Goodsir), from Cabes, which arrived here 24th December, refused to proceed in the vessel, alleging that she was not seaworthy, and that the cargo (esparto) had been shipped in a wet state. The men state that the vessel had been twice on shore; that the stringers in the hold are rotten, the beams forward and aft defective, and the deck leaky; that the vessel makes water; that the cargo is wet and heated, and that they are afraid of its catching fire. A survey was held, and the surveyor recommended a partial discharge of the cargo for the purpose of verifying the defects alleged, but this the master refused to allow, stating that the vessel was all right, but admitting that the cargo was shipped in a wet state. December 31.—The men who refused to proceed in the *Acadia* have withdrawn their refusal, and have consented to go in her. Vera, January 27, 9.30 a.m.—The *Acadia* (Goodsir), from Malta, with esparto and lead, was run ashore yesterday at Carboneras after burning twenty-four hours.

A letter from Turin states that a scene of great excitement was witnessed a few days back at the menagerie in the Piazzi d'Armi. M. Bidel, a tamer of wild beasts, had been accustomed to collect lions, lionesses, bears, and hyenas in the same den with a lamb, and to make them caress the latter without doing it any injury. On this occasion he had thrust the head of the little animal into the mouth of the lion, when suddenly the king of beasts was seen to close its jaws, from which blood at once flowed in abundance. The spectators were in consternation, and uttered loud cries, supposing that the exhibitor himself would be devoured the next moment. Bidel, however, struck the beast a smart blow on the head with his closed hand, and the dead body of the lamb fell from its mouth. The lion roared, but at the order of the tamer went sullenly to lie down in a corner of the cage. At that moment a lioness rushed on the exhibitor, but fortunately only tore the sleeve of his shirt. Bidel then retreated to another corner, and ordered by a gesture his terrible pupils to withdraw into another compartment. They all obeyed, and the man then profited by that moment to make his escape from the cage.

The journals of Nantes narrate the total loss of the English steamer *Bedlington*, of Newcastle, at the mouth of the Loire. The vessel, laden with corn, had left the first-named port, and had already discharged her pilot, when she was seen from the shore to cast anchor. Some accident had apparently happened to her machinery. During the afternoon signals of distress were hoisted, and the steamer began to drift on to the rocks, and shortly afterwards touched. A boat was then launched from the vessel; four of the crew entered it and made for the shore, but the frail bark was soon seen to founder, and the spectators who were watching the scene with painful interest could only save two of the men. The tide was in the meantime fast rising, and the bystanders were presently horrified to see the vessel break in half at the middle. Seven men were still on board. One boldly threw himself into the sea and was rescued; his skull was fractured, and he was taken to the hospital, but is believed to be now out of danger. Another climbed to the rigging and remained there for several hours, but could not maintain himself until the ebb of the tide, and perished. The six others had long before disappeared. Of the crew of eleven three only were saved.

The Mexicans are not the most moral people in the world. To make a raid across the border and seize the cattle of breeders in Texas does not trouble their conscience. So long as they are not caught in the act they are happy. There is a man in Pinto county, Texas, known to his neighbours as Jack Hinton, who has lost severely by the thieving raids, and to recover his property he has put into execution a peaceful plan. Finding that some two hundred breeders in his State had suffered like himself, he obtained from each a power of attorney to act in the premises; then, collecting one hundred and fifty men, with the avowed intention of helping him to drive the stock home, he organized and armed them. With this little army he crossed the Mexican border, visited the place where the "stray" bovines were kept in durance, shook his legal papers under the very noses of the bewildered. Mexicans, and speedily obtained what he desired. Of course it was the papers which did the business. The one hundred and fifty men with pistols in their holsters, and carbines slung over their shoulders, had no effect upon the cattle thieves. As a strictly law-abiding citizen, Hinton is a success. Already he has recovered cattle to the value of 250,000 dols., and it is estimated that when he gets through, Texas will be half a million richer than she was before he commenced operations.

Further accounts have been received of the attack made by the United States troops on the Modoc Indians on the 17th ult. The Modocs fought naked and with the greatest desperation, springing from rock to rock, picking off the soldiers, and obliging many of them to hide themselves till darkness afforded means for their escape. The troops made several charges along the line of the lava beds, but were repulsed. The howitzers could not be used to advantage, owing to a dense fog. An eye-witness says that the troops fought with determined bravery, but could not see their foes. Once only during the day did the Indians manifest a willingness to fight in the open field, and a company of soldiers charged upon them, when they fled back to their rocky coverts. The dense fog protected each party, and prevented the Indians from picking off the troops with their rifles at long range. The Oregon volunteers, acting as the rear guard, made a gallant fight, and prevented the wounded men and the howitzers and camp equipage from falling into the hands of the Modocs. Captain Jack, the Modoc chief, preserves regular military discipline, and drills his men every day, with the assistance of persons well acquainted with military tactics and ambushing, who are supposed to be renegade whites who have become their allies. Men from the scene of the fight with the Modocs say that the squaws took part in the battle.

The *Hong Kong Daily Press* publishes an account of a murder, so horrible, as to be scarcely credible. It appears that the goldbeaters of Soochow have it, among other old customs, that a master goldbeater can only engage one apprentice at a time, and this is limited to large shops only. A master goldbeater, however, head of the guild, tried to break through the custom by employing a new apprentice before the time of the old one had expired. This the members of the craft resisted. The magistrate before whom the case was brought decided that the master was legally right. The workmen at last invited him to the guild-hall to talk matters over. He went, guarded by some Yamen runners. When he arrived at the hall he was dragged in, the doors closed, and the runners were excluded, in spite of all their efforts to gain an entrance. Shortly they heard cries of murder from the goldbeater, and rushed off for the magistrate. When this officer arrived he readily gained admittance, and a horrible sight met his view. A man, naked and already dead, was bound to a pillar, covered from head to foot with wounds caused by the teeth of 120 human beings. The magistrate closed the doors to prevent the culprits from escaping, and asked a little girl, the daughter of the porter, to point out the ringleaders and relate what she saw. They first stripped their victim, and bound him to a pillar. He was then told that he was to be bitten to death for having broken the customs of the craft. He was then set upon and bitten to death by these savages. Moreover, the Chinese do not think that the ringleaders will be convicted of murder, as the laws do not provide any death punishment for biting a person to death!

ABDICATION OF THE KING OF SPAIN.

King Amadeus of Spain would seem to have grown all at once wearied of his thorny throne, and to have made up his mind for abdication, just at the moment when the birth of an heir to the crown in all appearance made the Savoy dynasty secure, or, at least for the time, strong. His Majesty, whether discouraged by the incessant outbreaks of revolt, or disheartened by political intrigues nearer the Palace, of which we have no account, has placed his abdication at the disposal of the Prime Minister; but an attempt will be made to induce the King to withdraw from his intention, and, to afford time for the effort, the sittings of the Cortes are suspended for some days. It is stated, however, that, should his Majesty firmly maintain his resolve and resign his powers—as in that case he would do—into the hands of the national representatives, the Cortes will make arrangements for carrying on the Government. Meanwhile Marshal Serrano has been summoned to Madrid by the Conservative leaders, and the issue of the crisis may not a little depend on his counsels.

In Tuesday's sitting of the Cortes, the King's message announcing his resignation was read. His Majesty says that it is a great honour to preside over the destinies of a country, however profoundly disturbed it may be, and that he had been resolved to keep his oath and respect the Constitution, believing that his loyalty would compensate for the errors due to his inexperience. "My good wishes," adds the King, "have deceived me; for Spain lives in the midst of perpetual conflict. If my enemies had been foreigners, I would not abandon the task, but they are Spaniards. I wish neither to be the King of a party nor to act illegally; but believing all my efforts to be sterile, I therefore renounce the Crown for myself, my sons, and heirs."

The President then proposed that the King's message should be sent to the Senate, and that both Chambers should unite and assume the sovereignty.

The abdication of the King was unanimously accepted, and the Cortes appointed a commission for replying to his Majesty's message. The Cortes also appointed a commission to accompany the King to the frontier.

Señor Pi brought forward a proposal demanding that the National Assembly assumes all powers, and will appoint a responsible Government; another Assembly to be entrusted with the duty of determining the form of the Republic.

The motion was divided into several parts, the first establishing the Republic, and giving to the Assembly all sovereign powers, was adopted by 256 votes against 32.

PASSED AWAY.

Mrs. Charles Selby, the well-known actress, on Saturday evening last.

The Empress Caroline Augusta, widow of the Emperor Francis, of Austria, at Vienna, on Sunday afternoon, aged eighty-three.

Miss Maria B. Jones, the leading actress at Drury-lane Theatre, on Tuesday morning, after a brief illness. She played towards the end of last year in the "Lady of the Lake," and was to have taken the principal part in "The Cataract of the Ganges," which is about to be produced at Drury-lane.

Mr. James Milnes Gaskell, who for many years represented the borough of Wenlock in the House of Commons. Mrs. Gaskell, the widow of the deceased, is well known as a voluminous writer and the author of "Mary Barton," "The Life of Charlotte Bronté" ("Jane Eyre"), "Ruth," and other works.

Mr. Baker Brown, who but a few years since was considered one of the most skilful operating surgeons of the age. He sustained many attacks of illness, and lastly was attacked with cerebral paralysis, which ended on Monday in death from congestion, caused by the sudden accession of cold weather acting upon a brain already seriously disorganized.

Mr. Joseph Sheridan Lefanu, at his residence in Dublin, on the 7th inst., aged 55. He was the author of many well-known fictions, replete with vivid description and keen analysis of character. For a considerable time he conducted the *Irish University Magazine*, and revived the glory of its best days.

OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

SKATING IN PARIS.

Skating was one of the most fashionable winter amusements of Paris during the days of the Second Empire, thanks to the *Club des Patineurs*, which counted amongst its members the greater part of the Imperial Court. Crowds would assemble daily to view, at a respectful distance, the Emperor and Empress, with their chosen associates, gliding over the frozen surface of the fountains in the reserved garden of the Tuileries. At night, too, the Bois de Boulogne used to be lit up. Muffled in furs, and arrayed in costumes which, if somewhat eccentric, were certainly tasteful, the *beau monde* hastened to the famous lake. There, by the light of innumerable torches, fairy-like revels were held, the more active ladies and gentlemen of the Court frequently indulging in quadrilles on the ice until the small hours. The senators and graver dignitaries used to be pushed about in sledges, and smiled approvingly; though one ever-memorable night the senior chamberlain, who had been tempted to put on a pair of skates, fell, twisted his neck and damaged his nose. But all these things have been duly recorded by pen and pencil already.

Since the advent of the Republic, this winter, these festivals have lost most of their attractions, and therefore, by way of novelty, our artist has chosen to delineate a scene to be witnessed in another and entirely different quarter of Paris. This is the Glacière, or ice reservoir of the 13th Arrondissement. The ice is gathered from the surface of three large reservoirs fed by the waters of the Bièvre, and situate near the new park of Mont Souris. On the centre of these the men and lads of the neighbourhood are in the habit of assembling to indulge in skating and in sliding about on little sledges, propelled by the occupant by means of sticks furnished at the end with iron spikes. As may be seen from our engraving, the individuals patronizing the locality are of anything but a fashionable appearance, though the mirth and good-humour prevailing amongst them more than compensates for the absence of all pretentions to gentility. Tilting matches between the sledges are of constant occurrence, and much merriment is excited by the way in which the parties on coming into collision lose their seats and fly off sprawling on to the ice. Altogether the spectacle is a novel and interesting one.

ICE STORING IN PARIS.

The ice that forms on the surface of these reservoirs is collected in the following manner:—A boat is left moored in the centre of the piece of water, and when it freezes soon becomes surrounded by ice. When this is sufficiently thick, men get into the boat, and breaking the ice that surrounds it, throw up the broken pieces on to the solid ice, where other men pull them along to a cart awaiting them. By this means none of the floating pieces are lost. The cart, on being filled, takes the road to the ice-house, in which its load is stored for consumption during the summer. We give a view of the ice-houses of the Bois de Boulogne, in which the ice collected in a similar manner from the picturesque lake of that locality is preserved.

SLEIGHING NEAR VIENNA.

The capital of Austria is decidedly a pleasure-loving city, and its inhabitants seem fully bent upon carrying out the plan of making the best of life whilst it lasts. Like the dwellers in many continental cities, they pass no inconsiderable portion of their time in the open air, patronizing in the summer the innumerable beer and pleasure gardens with which the place is surrounded. When, however, winter spreads its snowy mantle over the ground, the amusement of sitting on a bench in the open air and consuming mugs of malt liquor becomes unfeasible; but then a new pastime is found. Sledges of all sorts, shapes, and sizes, make their appearance, as if by the wave of an enchanter's wand, in the streets, and go dashing about in all directions over the snow, laden with excited pleasure-seekers. Great taste is displayed in many of these turn-outs, and those of the nobility are frequently decorated in so gorgeous and lavish a style as would drive a Long Acre coach-builder beside himself with wonder.

SCENES AT ZANZIBAR.

Zanzibar, which is situate on the East Coast of Africa, is, perhaps, best known to our readers as the spot from which we receive intelligence of Dr. Livingstone, through the medium of Dr. Kirk, our consular representative there. It is governed by a Sultan, who derives a large portion of his revenue from the slave trade, and whose co-operation in putting down this iniquitous traffic is the object of the mission of which Sir Bartle Frere is the head.

As mentioned in the Queen's Speech, this mission has reached the place of its destination, and entered into communication with the Sultan. Sir Bartle Frere and his suite arrived at Zanzibar on the 12th January, and the next day they visited the Sultan. A correspondent of a contemporary reports that a number of American officers, as well as officers of the English navy, accompanied him on his visit, and a grand reception had been prepared for the party.

The letter from the Queen to the Sultan was duly delivered at this interview. He intended to go to the coast, and would then probably travel some distance into the interior. The Sultan is reported to be desirous to allow American vessels of war to capture slave dhows. Captain Wilson, of the American Navy, however, has not been authorized to enter into a treaty on the subject.

Our two engravings represent, the one, the Slave Market, in which the principal dealers are Hindoo subjects of Great Britain, locally known as Banians; the other, the punishment inflicted upon unhappy slaves who have been guilty of theft. It is, as may be seen, a mild form of crucifixion, sufficiently painful as to cause intense suffering to the victim subjected to it, especially beneath the burning sun of Africa, and yet not of a nature to interfere with his future ability to work; for slaves are valuable, and to injure them permanently is to deteriorate a paying property.

THE WRECK OF THE "OTTO."

In a late impression we briefly noted the fast Norwegian brig *Otto* having gone ashore in Mount's Bay, one mile east of Penzance, and of her crew having been rescued by the lifeboat. *Richard Lewis*. Further details, accompanied by a sketch from which our engraving is taken, have been received, and from these it appears that the service rendered by the lifeboat of the National Institution was of a very gallant and determined character. The brig, which was bound from Bahia to Falmouth with a cargo of sugar, drove ashore about three o'clock in the morning of Sunday, the 26th ult. At once the alarm was given, and the lifeboat and rocket apparatus were got out, and in a few minutes two rockets were fired, and by means of the second one a communication was established between the ship and the shore; but the attempt to get off the hawser failed, on account of the cradle becoming entangled in the rigging. Meantime the lifeboat was being brought down towards the water's-edge, but such was the character of the beach, that the carriage wheels sank into the sand, and for some time the boat could not be launched. Every device was tried. There was a large number of men from Penzance and Chyandour present, and sheer physical strength was used, the crew dismounting, but all in vain.

At last a few seas came in considerably farther than had been their wont, and it was hoped that now was the time. After three or four gallant attempts, during which many men were up to their waists in the surf, the boat was launched, and Captain Howorth (the inspecting commander of coastguard), Mr. Downing (the banker), and others, lost their legs for a moment, and the whole ground seemed one shifting quicksand. In a few minutes the lifeboat was alongside the stranded vessel, and speedily it was again on the beach, with the shipwrecked crew on board. As it had been no easy matter to launch, so it was no easy matter to pull the boat out of the surf. At length, by sheer strength, the boat was pulled up, and all hands jumped out of her safe on land. The men looked pretty well, and did not seem much exhausted or seriously alarmed. They wanted water, as their supply had become brackish.

It was impossible to praise too highly the exertions of Captain Howorth, Mr. Blackmore, and all the coastguard men; and the lifeboat's crew and friends, under Mr. Downing, Captain Howorth, and Mr. Holbrook, acted nobly and resolutely under great difficulties. Indeed, without the help of outsiders it would have been absolutely impossible to launch the lifeboat and take the crew off.

The work of the National Lifeboat Institution in saving life from shipwreck in the year 1872 may thus be summarized:—By lifeboats, 569 lives saved; by shore boats and other means, for whose services the institution granted rewards, 170; total, 739.

THE NEW FRANCO-GERMAN BOUNDARIES.

The committee of French and German officers entrusted with the task of marking out the new frontier between their respective countries have completed their task. The boundary line is indicated by low stone pillars placed at the distance of a hundred metres apart. These stones are about four feet in length, enter the ground to a depth of eighteen inches, the part remaining above forming a quadrangular pillar, with the direction in which the neighbouring boundary-lines lie marked upon it. The frontier line has, as far as possible, been traced so as to follow the existing boundaries of various *communes*, only two of these having been divided, of which one is Avricourt. The placing of the pillars, of which we give an engraving from a sketch by one of the surveyors engaged in the operation, has elicited much dolorous comment from the French press. Still, as one of the writers observes, "frontiers are not eternal!"

A BOUT AT HAKELN.

Our illustration represents two athletes engaged in a bout at "Hakeln," a game which is in high repute among the sturdy villagers of Upper Bavaria.

The game of Hakeln is a very simple one. Two men stand foot to foot on a chalk line drawn along the floor. There they hook the middle fingers of their right hands together, and then each endeavours to drag his opponent to him over the fatal line. The game requires an exertion of force that would not be credited without a trial, though a certain knack of throwing the whole muscular power into one sudden effort may enable the really weaker man to win. Such tricks as suddenly slackening the effort in order to cause the opponent to lose his balance are practised, and the winner must keep on his guard against his losing adversary, who, by suddenly letting go, may floor him, and, if compelled to acknowledge himself beaten, have the satisfaction of seeing his conqueror rolling under a table. Beer all around is generally the prize. The scene of the contest we have represented is the common room of the village inn. The quaint furniture and appliances, and the figure of the watchman armed with a halberd, show how Old World ways and customs still flourish in these out-of-the-way regions.

In Pinsgau, and especially at Taxenbach, Hakeln is almost a national game. On one of their holidays in June, the young men test each other in this game in an open field before crowds of spectators, and the victor, acknowledged as *Alkmayer*, remains the lion of the village till the next year renews the contest.

The *Stemmen* is a similar game. A line is drawn on the table, the two antagonists plant fist against fist, and the endeavour is to push one away from the line. The left hand must not be placed on the table.

"THE WIFE OF CLAUDE."

In Paris, the artistic city, the production of a new play is an event in the true sense of the word. The excitement for months beforehand is intense, and when a well-known playwright deigns to favour the stage with a fresh dramatic effort, crowds of ardent sight-seers of all classes of society flock to the box-offices and wait patiently, in all weathers, merely for the chance of being able to book a seat for some far-off night; while the rich and fashionable playgoers are good customers at the offices for the sale of tickets at exorbitant prices. Should the novelty be ever such a failure it will run for six weeks or more, as it not unfrequently happens that every available coign of vantage is let right on for weeks in advance, before even the play has seen the light. The excitement consequent upon the production of the new and bewildering comedy, or as we should style it, drama of "La Femme de Claude," at the Gymnase, has scarcely cooled down yet, and it is the universal topic of dramatic conversation. Seats still fetch an enormous premium, and the musicians have been dismissed, two rows of stalls occupying the space usually devoted to the orchestra.

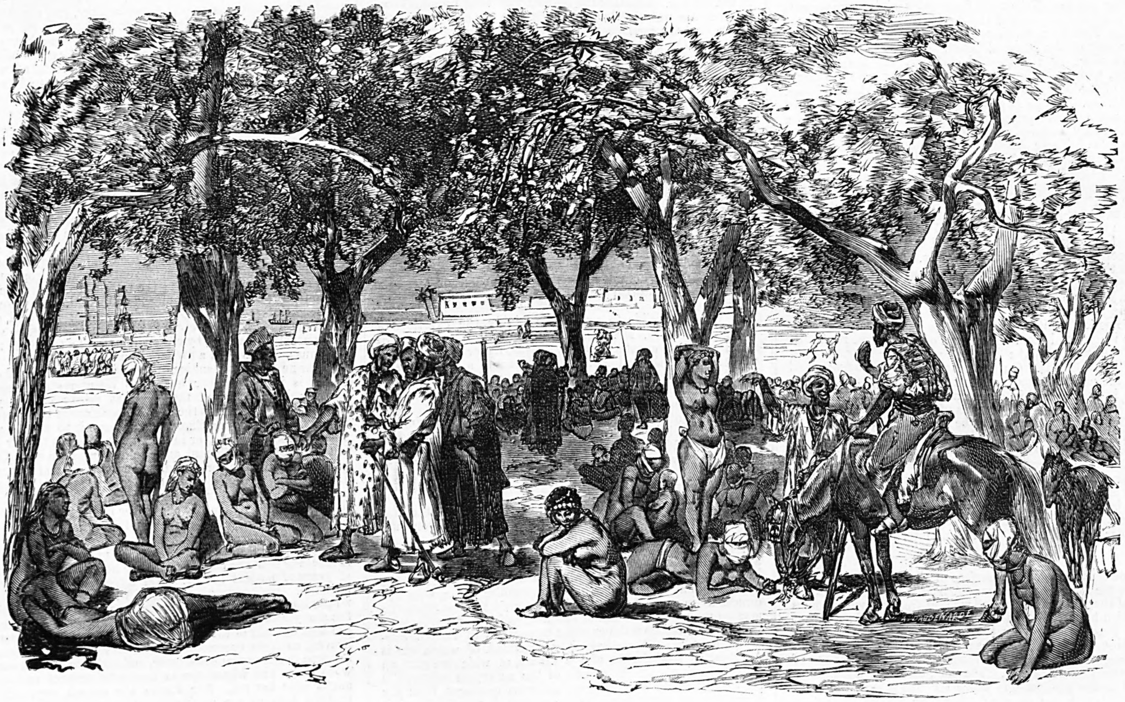
In an expurged form faint and penned with mild discretion, the following, sketch will give some idea of the extraordinary plot:—Claude Ripper is an inventor, an honest-hearted, scientific searcher of superior mind and vast intelligence; his mother is dead, and, alone in the world, he marries Cesarine. He soon perceives that his wife is unworthy of his affection, and apparently with cold indifference, abandons her to her fate, knowing well that all her feigned repentance is only a cloak to further disorder. At last, pretending that she is about to pay a visit to her sick mother, she leaves the calm country retreat and goes to Paris. Claude hopes never to see her again; his life is spent in the little house where his parents have lived and died, and all his energies are centred in one darling idea, one pre-occupation, the termination of his cannon—a marvellous piece of artillery which will render his beloved France the most powerful of all nations. His fortune has been devoted to this end, and he is obliged to enter into negotiations for the sale of his revered dwelling, which he occupies in company of Antonin, his pupil, fellow-worker, and adopted son; Daniel, an enthusiastic Israelite, whose dream is the re-establishment of the Jews as a nation; and the daughter of this latter personage, the blonde Rebecca. All seems calm and happy in this modest household, when the wretched woman, who is briefly called Claude's wife, in allusion to Messalina, the wife of the Roman Emperor, comes back, tired of the miserable, infamous life she has been leading. Here begins the first act on the morning of her return, the action concluding on the night of the same day. Antonin madly loves the wife of his benefactor, but Claude has guessed this insane passion; and when the wretched youth falls at his feet, entreating to be allowed to depart, he makes him stay, and, to show his forgiveness, gives him a fresh proof of his confidence by entrusting to his care the key of an iron-bound cabinet, containing the papers relative to the secret of his discovery, so that if Claude should die suddenly his young disciple would be able to carry the grand work on to an end. Cantagnac, the spy of a great and mysterious European society, founded for the purpose of seizing upon each new invention and appropriating it for its own profit, arrives at the retreat to secure the fruit of the toiler's labour by fair means or by foul. He knows all the frightful secrets of Cesarine's eventful life, and coolly offers her a fortune to betray her husband's cherished secret. He conceals his mission by pretending that he has come to buy the house, and is soon a favoured guest.

Cesarine, notwithstanding the depths to which she has fallen, is jealous of her husband's disinterested friendship towards Rebecca; and the manifest purity of the young Jewess does not prevent the odious suspicions of her corrupted mind. Rebecca loves Claude, and avows it to him as she is about to follow her father in his travels through the far East; but her passion is ethereal, and she only hopes to meet Claude in another and better world. She is the ideal woman of Dumas; and the author has created this strange young girl, candid and innocent, in apposition to his monstrous heroine, who has nothing womanly about her but her fatal, Circe-like beauty. Cesarine, on the track of the secret, begs Claude to pardon her faults; and, even when prostrate at his feet, with all the eagerness of tearful repentance in her countenance, she is thinking how she can best rob the honest man of the fruits of years of patient labour. Her appeal does not move the husband. He knows his worthless wife; and her guilt merits no pardon. This disdainful scorn rouses every bad passion in the stony heart of this modern Messalina, and we have here the best episode of the play. As Satan felt when driven from heaven, so feels the woman. She has some little spark of remorse in her venial conscience, and feels that one favourable word from him whom she is bound to respect and admire might save her yet. She knows she cannot approach him, that his feelings are utterly beyond her comprehension; and in her blind rebellion against herself, in her bitter, blasphemous envy at the sight of the honour and virtue embodied in the inexorable and utter indifference of the broken-hearted Claude, she resolves that if she cannot be raised to his level, she will drag him down to hers. Claude sees the storm coming; and as she wildly, madly threatens, he coldly declares, hissing out each word with fearful calm, "If ever you cross the path of any I hold dear, if ever you try to hinder the fulfilment of my invention, *I'll kill you!*"

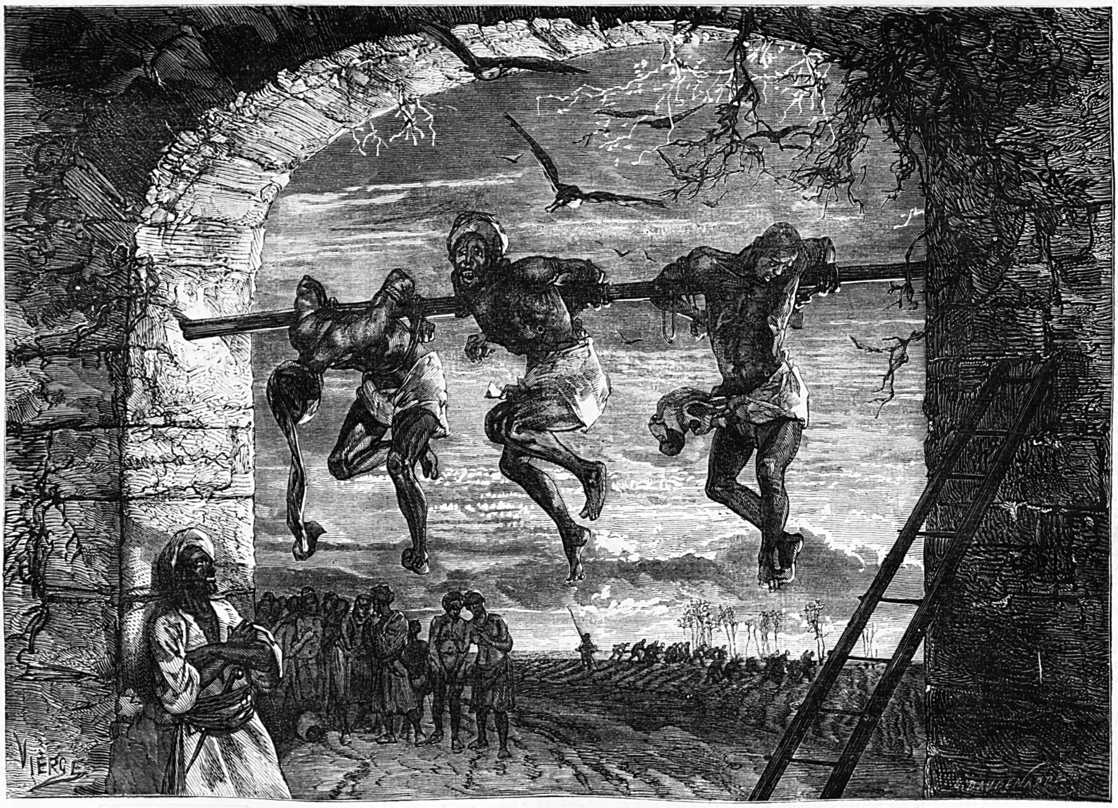
The last act now opens. It is night, and alone in the moonlight, which gleams in his study, lighting up his broad, manly face, and flickering in strange shadows upon the curiously shaped instruments which are crowded upon the walls, Claude is thinking. He interrogates his conscience, passes his, wrongs in review, and becomes all the more resolved to do justice himself should Cesarine once more try to destroy the remnants of tranquillity and peace he at present enjoys. The woman is plotting, and, prompted by the devilish Cantagnac, ever at her elbow, she has placed a large sum of money in the care of Antonin, pretending that she intends it to save her husband from ruin, and he puts it for safety in the same safe where the precious documents of his master are enclosed. Antonin falls easily into her toils; she leads the passionate boy to believe that Claude has struck her, and offers to fly with him. Unable to meet his benefactor without shame, he consents in despair, and Cesarine asks him for her money before the departure. The young man opens the safe, when Cesarine clutches at the papers. This infamous action brings Antonin to his senses; a frightful struggle takes place between the two, and the unnatural woman, approaching the window, is about to throw the manuscript to Contagnac, who is posted in the gargen. Claude suddenly enters, and on the threshold of the room assists at the last part of this horrible scene. "Thief!" he cries to his wife; she turns to escape, when, snatching up a gun, he pulls the trigger, and Cesarine falls dead; while calmly addressing Antonin, the avenging husband says, "Come, now—and work!"

The advocates of peace at any price will be glad to hear that Egypt, with a true millennial instinct, has already begun to find other occupations of a less objectionable nature than that of bloodshed for her soldiers. The *Nil* of the 16th ult. describes the procession conveying presents sent by Prince Tevfik Pasha to the residence of his bride. First rode a squadron of Egyptian cavalry, followed by a company of infantry, whose band played national Arab airs, and preceded soldiers bearing eight salvers containing valuable articles of jewellery; next came another troop of soldiery with military music, followed by eight upborne salvers, equally loaded with rich presents; then a further company of infantry, with its band, heading four salvers with a more costly burden than the previous one, the whole procession being wound up by a final squadron of cavalry. Crowds of spectators thronged the streets of Cairo along the line of route to witness the scene. This admirable plan of employing soldiers in purely complimentary duties might be tried with advantage on St. Valentine's Day. The ordinary duties of the Post Office *employés* are, it is well known, sadly interfered with by the shoals of valentines they are called upon to deliver on that anniversary. There is no reason why the British army, now that arbitration has taken away its business, should not march to the assistance of the Post Office, and distribute valentines. The effect of these interesting missives would, moreover, be greatly heightened by their being delivered with all the pomp, if not with the circumstance of glorious war.

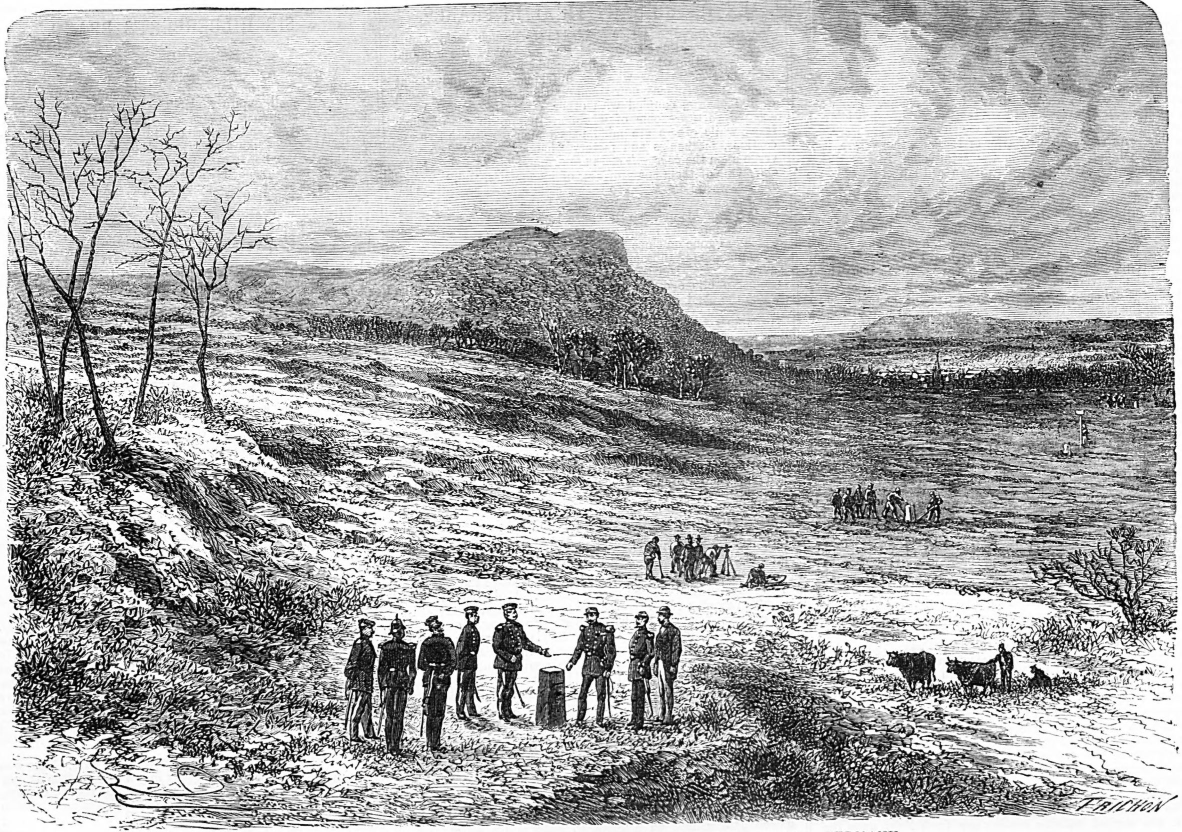
MADAME TUSSAUD'S EXHIBITION.—A portrait model of his late Imperial Majesty NAPOLEON III, lying in state is now added. Napoleon relics. "The most remarkable thing in the museum," says M. de Cassagnac, "is the grand physiognomy of Napoleon I." Everything connected with him has been collected with admirable care.—Admission 1s. Children under ten, 6d. Extra rooms, 6d. Open from 10 a.m. till 10 p.m.—[ADVT.]



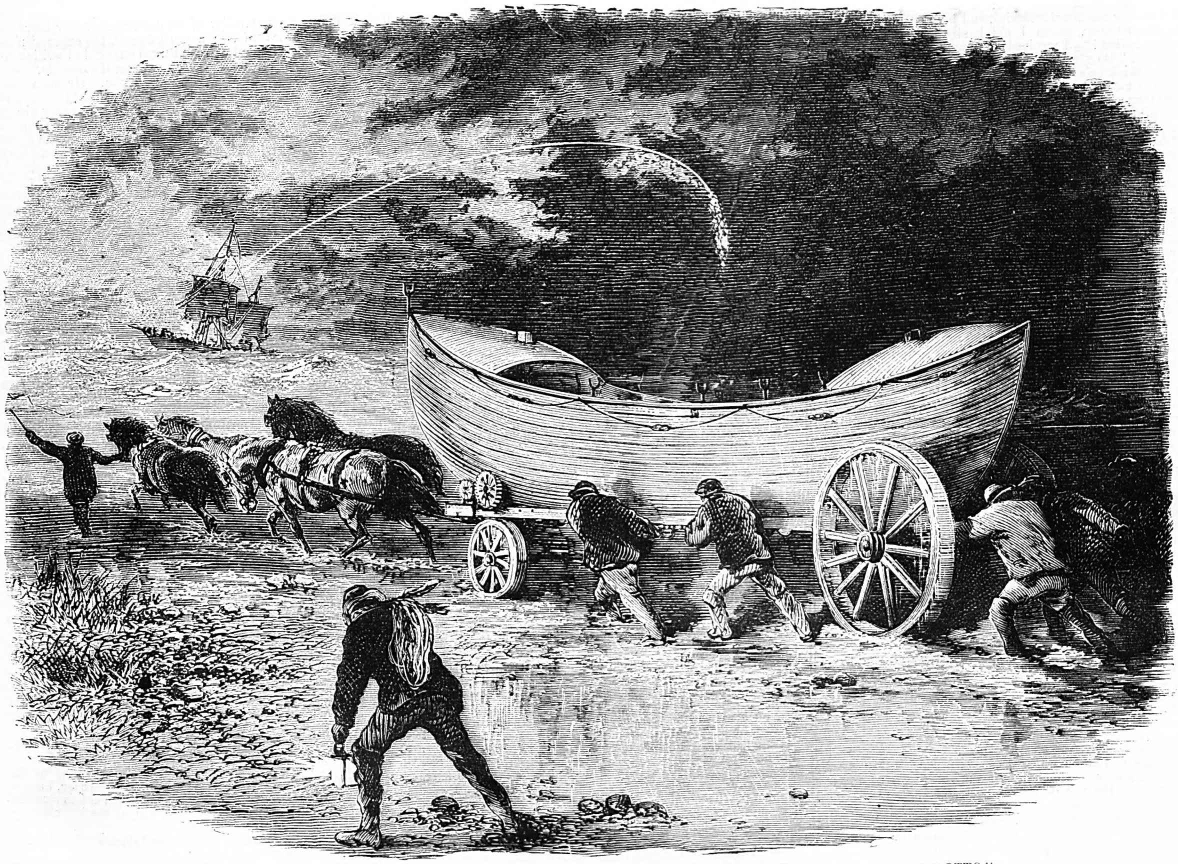
SIR BARTLE FRERE'S MISSION.—THE SLAVE MARKET AT ZANZIBAR.



SIR BARTLE FRERE'S MISSION.—PUNISHMENT INFLICTED ON SLAVES FOR THEFT.



MARKING OUT THE NEW FRONTIER LINE BETWEEN FRANCE AND GERMANY.



THE MOUNT'S BAY LIFE-BOAT "RICHARD LEWIS" PROCEEDING TO RESCUE THE CREW OF THE "OTTO."

THE "NORTHFLEET."

In accordance with instructions received by Messrs. Lloyd's agents in Cadiz, an official examination was made of the *Murillo* at that port on the 1st instant, the greatest possible care being taken that no part of the steamer should escape investigation. The interior of the hull was first of all searched, and no indentation whatever could be discovered. From age and bilgewater the inside of the vessel was somewhat injured, but the effects of anything like a violent concussion were not visible. As regards the exterior of the hull, there were, it is understood, certain marks on the stem which indicated that the steamer had come into collision with a craft of some description, but injuries such as might be supposed to result from violently entering into contact with a ship of the size and description of the *Northfleet* were apparently wanting.

More detailed information from Cadiz shows that the evidence of Mr. Goodeve, of Wandsworth, and of Mr. Bell, of Jarrow, both of them passengers on board the *Murillo*, confirmed the supposition that this steamer was the one which caused the destruction of the *Northfleet;* both gentlemen distinctly testifying to the occurrence of a collision, and also to hearing the cries of the drowning emigrants, as well as to the great size and description of the ship with which the vessel they were on board came in contact.

On Thursday, the 6th instant, Parker and Allen, the divers, went down at 8.45 a.m. Parker remained under water one hour and five minutes. Allen, who was called up through the *Prosperous* having broken adrift from her moorings, remained down 40 minutes. Parker succeeded in cutting the shrouds off the starboard rigging, and Allen in partially clearing the mainsail from the shrouds on the port side. At 11 o'clock the wind freshened, and diving had to be suspended.

A strong wind has since been blowing in the Channel, and the divers have been obliged to abstain from their work.

The only body which has been washed ashore is that of a child, aged apparently about eighteen months; but identification was impossible, the greater part of the infant's face having been beaten away. A stocking and a boot were the only articles of clothing on the body, which was interred in the churchyard of St. Margaret-in-the-Bay, a village situated between Dover and Deal.

At a meeting of the *Northfleet* Fund Committee, the Lord Mayor presiding, the subscriptions were reported as amounting to about £7,000, and a general scheme of distribution was agreed upon, according to which Mrs. Knowles will receive £1,000; the widow and family of the first officer, £800; while the remainder is divided among the survivors and the relatives of those who perished—the brave seamen who contributed to the mitigation of the disaster not being forgotten. Some remarks were made before the Committee adjourned on the advantage of holding an exhibition of appliances for saving life, and on the absolute necessity for securing the enforcement of a distinctive distress signal at sea.

Nottingham has sent a handsome locket with an inscription, commemorative of Captain Knowles's brave conduct on board the *Northfleet*, to be presented to his widow, Mrs. Knowles.

The Board of Trade enquiry opened at Greenwich last week has elicited nothing casting any fresh light upon the catastrophe. Amongst other witnesses examined, Mr. George Brack, Trinity-house pilot, in charge of the *Northfleet* at the time of the collision, deposed: I saw a steamer backing out from our starboard midships, and my first impulse was to hail the steamer, which I did loudly, crying out, "What steamer is that?" I received no answer. I then said to the carpenter, "Do you think he's an Englishman?" and he said, "No, I think he's a Frenchman." I did not hear any voices from the steamer. She appeared to be higher out of the water than we were. Her bow was high, with a straight stem. I saw all her lights, for from where I stood she was stem on me. Captain Knowles came on deck, and he hailed her. I said to the carpenter, "Rig the pumps at once, the ship must be seriously injured." The steamer backed away, and I lost sight of the red light and the mast-head light, and saw her green light, which showed that her head was to southward. She was very soon out of our sight. She evidently got away from us as fast as she could.

John Easter, boatswain of the *Northfleet*, described the setting of the watch and the collision, after which he said: I went to the captain, and he ordered me to get the blue lights. Brand and the cabin-boy were letting them off. I was then ordered to clear away the gun, and I took it to the port side forward. I put the sponge-rod in, and in drawing it the sponge-head came off in the gun. Then I put the worm in and tried to draw the sponge, and then the worm-head came off. The captain then came forward, and I told him what had occurred, and he told me to put some powder into the touch-hole, and try to clear it. I did so, but it was no use. The captain then ordered me to clear away the starboard lifeboat and take in the women and children. When I got aft before she was started I found she was full of passengers. I tried to put them out, but as fast as I did so others got in. Captain Knowles then came up with his lady, and said, "Here's a charge for you," and I took charge of her. I lifted both men and women out of the boat, but they got in again. The captain spoke to them, and told them that boat was for the women and children, but they paid no attention. Ultimately she was lowered with several persons in her, but she got stove by the main-sheet bolt. When she touched the water we shoved off, and laid on our oars awaiting orders for about five minutes, when the captain gave me orders to shove off and make the first place I could fetch. He asked me if I was all right, and I told him the boat was in a sinking state. It was then he told me to shove off. We saw a light, and pulled towards it. It was the *City of London* tug, but before I reached it I saw the *Northfleet* go down.

The London correspondent of the *Scotsman* says:—"I hear that Mr. Millais meditates painting a picture which will reproduce an incident of the shipwreck of the *Northfleet*—the scene wherein Captain Knowles threatened with a revolver the cowards who were intent upon saving themselves before the women and children."

The superintendent of an American railway has sent to all the *employés* of the road a form of pledge for them to sign, whereby they agree to abstain from intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and the use of profane, ungentlemanly language. Accompanying the blank pledge is a circular informing the *employés* that this step is taken in consequence of frequent complaints at the office, and requesting those declining to sign to give notice of their intentions, that their places may be filled by others.

EXTRAORDINARY TRIAL IN FRANCE.

A hideous page is being added to the French Assize Court annals. Were there such a thing as a digest of the criminal records of the whole world, it could not furnish a more horrible recital than what is unfolded in the indictment against nine ruffians now standing their trial at Lille on a capital charge, coupled with other disgusting ones. The accused parties—some of whom are not quite out of their teens, while others are middle-aged men—are, with two exceptions, mechanics and factory "hands." The two who verge upon the *bourgeois* class are respectively 35 and 36 years old. One of them is a professor of gymnastics, and, it would appear, was in a position to earn a good income honestly. The other is an *employé* of the octroi, and, the indictment states, made use of his uniform to secure to himself and his fellow-prisoners impunity in the execution of a system of land piracy which has gone on since 1869.

To understand thoroughly the revolting case, some knowledge of French legislation on what the code styles offences against public decency is necessary. Now, the lever with which the band of the Lille "Bois de Boulogne" operated was precisely this legislation, and the police rules of Parent Duchatelet, which are applied to large towns. These rules are the terror of women and girls of the lower classes, who know that if they once are brought within their range they will be social outlaws for the rest of their days.

The banditti of the Lille Bois de Boulogne numbered over twenty persons, eleven of whom have escaped into Belgium and Germany. They systematically divided among them the parts they were to play in hunting down their prey. Generally speaking, their richest harvest was reaped in the long summer evenings, when the townspeople of Lille went out to breathe a little pure air in the park lying along the canal, and between the glacis of the walls and the citadel. If by any chance in the gloaming a sentimentally disposed couple lingered in secluded spots, two or three of the gang rushed upon them, collared them, and accused them. If injured innocence protested, false witnesses started up, apparently by chance, who pretended to belong to the police. Official medals were produced, which in the dusk were not very clearly visible, and finally the octroi *employé* came forward to prove the charge. The situation thus created was appalling. If during the last eighteen months of the Empire the man so accused "had political opinions," he felt that he was lost. Poor women or work-girls were terrified lest they should be placed perforce on the registry of vice, and respectable women trembled for fear of the scandal which would ensue if their misadventure should be made public. It seems incredible that an important town like Lille could have been terrorized, as the indictment states it was, by the bushrangers, who demanded hush-money without stint from their male victims, and went to the last extremity of outrage with their female ones. The octroi *employé* is charged with having boasted that 500 Lilloises passed in four years through his and his accomplices' hands. That the boast had a very solid substratum of fact cannot be doubted.

What led to the prosecution of this corporation of crime was a murder committed on the person of a German mechanic named Havez, and an attempt to outrage his sweetheart, Octavie Kenent, a very decent girl, it appears, of the age of seventeen. They were engaged to be married in a fortnight from the evening on which they were attacked in the park. Three men flung themselves on Havez, and under pretext of hauling him off to the lock-up, dragged him to the bank of the canal, where, according to the indictment, they strangled him, and threw him into the water. Octavie, who was both strong and swift of foot, was assaulted by three others. She at once saw that they must be false policemen, and made a desperate resistance. Her determined attitude frightened them back for a moment. Profiting by this opportunity, she rushed in the direction of the park-ranger's house, crying out for help as she ran. She got up to it before they could overtake her, and then they turned round and fled. Fortunate it was for her that they did so, for there was nobody inside the house to answer her knocks and cries. But she got safe home, and told her father and mother what had happened. They gave the alarm, and when Havez was missed from his work a murder was at once suspected. On dragging the canal the body of the young German was found by the police. It was badly beaten as if with a club, and the garotting operation had been performed by means of the sleeves of his blouse, which were knotted tight round his neck. Those of the bandits who are not accused of murder will be tried with closed doors. The case excites intense interest in Lille.

A touching instance of the "ruling passion strong in death" lately occurred in Paris. An actor at a minor theatre, who was at the same time a contributor to the illustrated journals, attempted in a fit of depression, caused by illness, to commit suicide by swallowing laudanum. Before taking the fatal step, however, he wrote to the editor of a paper to which he often sent articles a letter announcing his intention, and describing with much pathos the sorrows and troubles by which he had been driven to suicide. This he did in order to prove himself, as he expressed it, "a faithful contributor even to the verge of the tomb," by affording materials for an interesting paragraph in the next issue of the paper. The editor was not, it seems, tempted by the prospect of inserting so tragical a tale, or he was determined, at least, to alter the *dénouement*, for he hurried to his friend's house in time to save his life and to ruin the climax of the anticipated paragraph. He also obtained a promise from him that he would never again personally supply matter for insertion under the head of "Accidents and Offences."

The great sea serpent has been seen again—antedating his usual appearance by the entire length of the coming parliamentary session. His most recent visit, if we remember rightly, was to the waters of a Highland loch during the last dead season, and was involved in a certain amount of vagueness. But there is no vagueness about his movements this time. A ship captain has arrived at New York who declares that on his voyage home from Hong Kong in south latitude 29 deg. 38 min., east longitude 179 deg. 45 min., the great sea serpent passed before the eyes of himself and his crew. The creature, which moved within six feet of the vessel, and was plainly seen by all on deck, was at least fifty feet long, of a dark brown colour, and ornamented with black spots. It must not be supposed that sea-serpent evidence is always contemptible, however vague and inconclusive. Without, therefore, passing any opinion on this last story of a voyage to New York from Hong Kong, we may trust that a similar piece of good fortune will befall her Majesty's ship *Challenger*, and that there may be a harpoon or two at hand.

SIR HILDERBERT'S BRAND.

III.

"You must come, Nan," said Mrs. Grace, with a little laugh and a comical grimace. "Lady Jane must positively spare you, or I shall expire under the cadaverous gloom of the creature's countenance. Isn't it horrid that your genius is generally *outré* and bearish; and I must confess Signor Delbarti bristles like a cactus with oddities. Oh, Lady Jane, you must spare her to me!"

"Certainly," replied Lady Jane, promptly. "She shall return with you to The Grange at once. Anna, tell Grizzle to prepare for your visit."

"Lady Jane," said the girl, hurriedly, "I promised Lord Usher not to leave home until he returned. Pray, Mrs. Grace, do not urge me."

Lady Jane's brows gathered thundrous blackness as she glanced at the bright, pleading face, and Mrs. Grace wound her lovely arm round the fragile form.

"You cruel child!" she said. "Nay, I'm quite selfish enough to urge Lady Jane to exercise her authority. One would think I were an ogre, and The Grange my den."

She laughed a gay, cordial, infectious laugh, that brought a smile to Anna's delicate face, and the pure little being nestled lovingly against the stately form of the woman who had won her heart by such skilful snares as she knew how to weave. Those who knew her best, and such were those who had suffered at her hands, stood afar off and cursed the Circe in their hearts; but woe to those her wiles were spread to win; she could not choose but flutter into the bright snare of her smiles and caresses.

It was useless to rebel against the iron will of Lady Jane, and with some hesitation Anna was hurled triumphantly towards The Grange,

It was a bracing morning, with a keen, salt wind blowing from the sea, and the Autumn sunlight catching the white sails of the passing ships, as they faded on the purple horizon, and The Grange—

"A bulk
Of mellow brickwork on an isle of bowers"—

gleamed warmly in the bright day, as they drove up to it under the leafless limes.

Despite the exhilarating air, and the gay chatter of Mrs. Grace, Anna was strangely grave and depressed. She knew that Lord Usher had some hidden reason for wishing her to remain at home during his brief absence, and she felt that Mrs. Grace had not been considerate in urging her to disregard his wishes. Had Colonel Ashton not gone that very morning, she could have summoned his interference in her behalf, and she listened absently to her companion's sallies, with a heavy feeling at her heart that all would not go well with her.

She shivered as she entered the hall, which Mrs. Grace was quick to see, and drew her rapidly into a tiny apartment, gay with chintz and majolica, Sèvres china on gilt stands, flowers, books, uncut for the most part, and a piano—the apartment in which the lovely widow sustained her *rôle* of propriety to her county visitors. That other half-barbaric room in the west wing was her own especial bower.

At a small table in a bow-window, all aglow with flowers, sat the bent figure of a swarthy old man, with long white hair falling on the collar of his coat, and a heavy beard and moustache concealing, in a great degree, the expression and form of his mouth and chin. He was engaged in writing, but glanced up as the door opened, and gazed earnestly, almost rudely, at Anna, as Mrs. Grace led her in. He wore tinted spectacles, behind which the hue of his eyes was indistinguishable, but their restlessness and fire were not so easily hidden. He remained seated while Mrs. Grace, with an arch smile at Anna, presented him to the latter as Signor Delbarti, the gentleman who had been good enough to undertake the mounting of some valuable drawings she possessed; and Anna wondered a little, as, with a brusque, ungracious nod of acknowledgment, he resumed his writing, while, with an amused shrug of her handsome shoulders, Mrs. Grace turned away whispering to her:

"I prepared you for his eccentricities. *N'importe mignonne*, you will charm the bear to more urbanity before long!"

"Delbarti," said Mrs. Grace, suddenly.

They were alone. Mrs. Grace had finished her toilet for dinner, but Anna had not yet joined them.

The old man raised his head and glanced at the speaker. She was leaning indolently against the the gaily tinted majolica chimney-piece, looking across the room at him, where he sat, a little in the shadow. The firelight and lamplight fell strongly on her, and what might have been a latent uneasiness, shone in her Summery eyes as they met his.

"Well, signora," he said, in a low, hoarse voice, that rendered the sweet Italian tongue in which he spoke singularly unmusical, "I listen."

"Do you know your disguise is almost too perfect?" continued Mrs. Grace. "I would sit and talk to you for ever without recognizing even an inflection of your voice."

"When engaged as I am at present, it cannot be too complete," he answered, quietly. "Androsia, do you consider what I risk for you?"

She came suddenly to him, and laid her perfect hand on his. She stooped and gazed, with wide, shining eyes, into his face.

"Are you a coward?" she said, in a low, throbbing voice. "Is the reward nothing?"

"It is much!" he said! "but, Androsia, is the sacrifice nothing?"

She drew back from him, folded her snowy arms across her heaving breast, and her opaque eyes shot fire.

"What sacrifice?" she queried. "It is a new thing for Alfiero Boncazzi to be nice and scrupulous.

"Hush!" he entreated. "Be cautious; a word may ruin all. But this frail child! Think an instant, Androsia. Is it indeed necessary?"

"Listen," she said, extending her white arm towards him. "You know me as I am—a woman believing nothing, fearing nothing. To you I never wear a mask. I say that for the deed you are to do, I give you myself; and, believe me, I never prized my beauty or wide possessions more than at this moment when they are helping me, through you, to the intoxicating joy of deep and deadly vengeance!"

A fiery triumph blazed in her eyes, and she turned and gazed into a long mirror close at hand.

"How incomparably beautiful above all women you are!" murmured Delbarti, gazing at her as though spell-bound.

A baleful, but dazzling light seemed actually to emanate from her, as she stood there—a perfect goddess!—

> "Strange, unwonted lustres fly
> From her flushed cheek and sparkling eye."

She seemed to shrink and cower from the glare of her wicked beauty, as though the scathing glow of a furnace had touched her; but when Anna joined them the next moment, she was herself again—gracious, lovely, and serene.

IV.

Anna Arundel was dead—had died instantly, of heart disease, a couple of days after her return from The Grange, and the blow that Lord Usher had lived in daily terror of had fallen. No one was surprised, for all the county knew on what a frail thread the beautiful young life had hung; and after a superficial and merely formal medical examination, they laid her in state in the lofty room where all those of the house that died were in turn laid.

Lady Jane shed no tear. She was no hypocrite, and the happiest moment of her life was that in which she stood at her darkened window and watched the groups of tearful faces that came and went, as the grateful country folk, to whom Anna had been an angel of light and consolation, came to look their last on her.

Lord Usher suffered, and was silent. Every detail of the funeral he arranged himself. It was his hands that laid the lilies on her bier; it was he that watched by her at night: but he spoke no word and made no sign.

Colonel Ashton, who hurried from London to the house of death, was more demonstrative than the bereft lover, and the tears dropped from his eyes as he looked at the radiant dead face.

"She was to have been heiress of my great wealth," he said, sadly, to Lady Jane. "I little thought to have seen her dead."

"Your wealth?" said Lady Jane, curiously.

"Yes," said Colonel Ashton, gravely. "While in India I married a Hindoo lady of high caste, who had saved my life at the risk of her own. She died immediately after our union, leaving me her immense wealth. Had Anna lived, she would have eventually become mistress of nearly fifteen thousand a year, and nearly as much more in jewels."

Lady Jane's grim face darkened, and she turned to draw the snowy lawn over the girl's face.

"It is late," she said, abruptly. "Your room is prepared, and Usher intends watching here to-night. We had better retire."

They left the dim and melancholy room, with its pale tapers and white-draped bier, and Lady Jane, with a short "Good-night," turned in the direction of her own apartments.

Colonel Ashton was moving thoughtfully away, when a hurried step sounded through the corridor, and Lord Usher came towards him. He carried in his hand a small piece of paper, and his face was perfectly colourless.

Without a word, he caught the veteran's arm, and drew him into the chamber he had just left, and Colonel Ashton felt that he was trembling as though in an ague fit. He closed the door, and putting the paper into the colonel's hand, said, hoarsely:

"Read that, and tell me, if you can, what it means."

The colonel, whose sight was dim, moved close to one of the tapers at the head of the bier, and read, written in a formal, expressionless hand:

"To night, as the clock strikes twelve, *watch your dead*."

He looked up at his young kinsman in utter bewilderment.

"How and where did this appear?" he queried.

Lord Usher shook his head.

"Not five minutes since it came crashing through the library window, wrapped round a pebble. It passes my comprehension why such a warning should come, and couched in such mysterious words."

"It may be some insolent and ill-timed jest," said the colonel, thoughtfully; "but, be it as it may, I will share your watch. What time is it now?"

"Half-past eleven," replied Lord Usher, consulting his watch.

"Hark! what a terrific peal of thunder!"

The sudden roar jarred the floor beneath them, and died slowly away, reverberating sullenly down the sky, and followed by a sobbing, sighing wind, and then the fierce dash of rain against the windows.

The pale tongues of the tapers flickered unsteadily as the wind swept down the capacious chimney, and the white velvet of the pall waved in the sudden draught.

A white wreath of half-open roses fluttered from the bier to the floor, and Lord Usher mechanically replaced it. His mind was in a whirl of painful thought, and his nerves were not altogether under control, but he forced himself to physical calmness, and seating himself by a small ebony stand in full view of the bier, he leant his head on his hands and endeavoured to subdue the inexplicable tumult in his heart and brain.

Colonel Ashton, too much disturbed to rest, went to one of the windows, and stood looking out at the sombre night, with its fierce illuminations of deadly lightning, and wild chorus of thunder, wind, and dashing rain. He was thinking deeply of the mysterious paper, but of course could form no conclusion on the subject; but he was conscious that, as the minutes slipped by, a curious feeling possessed him of uncontrollable excitement.

"We have not long to wait now," he said, softly, to Lord Usher. "We shall soon see what is meant."

Lord Usher sighed impatiently.

"A tragic time for jesting," he said, very bitterly; and rising, he walked slowly towards the bier, watched tenderly and pityingly by the veteran.

It stood on a slightly raised daïs in the centre of the apartment, and with the woeful gaze of a torn heart in his dark eyes, Lord Usher extended his hand to remove the shrouding lawn that hid the pearly face from his glance. As he did so, a distant, rapid clock began to strike the hour. His hand fell to his side, and he glanced at Colonel Ashton. At the same instant the white wreath slipped from the bosom of the corpse, and lay on the edge of the bier, without either of the men noticing the incident.

The last sharp, silvery sound died into silence, and with a sad smile, Lord Usher said:

"The hour is come and gone, and no sign to account for the warning."

He raised the lawn, and bent his eyes on the dead face. It gleamed up at him, white even against the snowy pillow of satin and lace on which it lay, but suddenly his voice rang out hoarsely:

"Colonel! for Heaven's sake, come here!"

The wide blue eyes were open; the chest heaving regularly, like that of a child awakening from a sweet sleep, and over lips and cheeks a soft flush was stealing like the reflection of the dawn on snow.

At this sublime moment, the force of Lord Usher's character asserted itself. He lifted the girl from the bier, and pressing the shining head against his breast, that the paraphernalia of death might not meet the wakening eyes, he bore her swiftly from the room, followed by the trembling steps of Colonel Ashton; and thus Anna Arundel returned from the portals of the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

V.

"What a sudden and fearful peal!" said Mrs. Grace, bending her head to listen, as a roar of thunder died into the distance.

She and her Italian guest were seated at supper in the gorgeous boudoir which was her favourite resort. A brilliant light flooded the apartment, rare wines gleamed like ruby and topaz, and a wealth of glowing flowers and perfumed fruit decorated the small table at which they sat.

Mrs. Grace had discarded her black robes, and her flushed cheeks and gleaming eyes were finely thrown out by the dead white of the Genoa velvet in which she was arrayed. Her hair was caught up by coils of pearls, and round her bare, polished shoulders was thrown an Oriental scarf of rosy gauze, embroidered in fanciful designs in gold and seed-pearls. She had woven herself a wreath of heavy vine-leaves and oleander blossoms, and crowned herself with it, and ever and anon her voice rang out in shrill, clear laughter. Her eyes were full of a savage, but dazzling brilliancy, and her full lips parted, showing the white teeth in a deadly and triumphant smile.

The Italian, though he had drunk heavily, sat watching her with a sombre, brooding fire in his eyes, and her reckless gaiety brought no answering smile to his dark face. There was a fatal and deadly air about him that failed to strike through her consciousness. That he was silent and *distrait* struck her, and she turned on him with a bright, mocking smile.

"The tempest has alarmed you," she said; "or your disguise of old age has stolen the fire from your heart, the life from your tongue. Why, cold Malcolm Grace was a warmer lover than *you*, Roncazzi!"

"I am thinking of the dead," replied the Italian, gazing into vacancy; "to-night I feel conscience is hardly a myth."

"Let us drink to the dead!" she cried, "and then to the speedy disappearance of your conscience. Come, I drink to the ghosts of Malcolm Grace and Anna Arundel!"

She seized a golden cup that stood half-full of wine on the table, and drained it. Her eyes flamed.

"To-morrow," she said, "we will be far on our way to the sunny South, and Anna Arundel will be the prey of 'a certain convocation of politic worms.'"

"To-morrow!" echoed the Italian; "there is a dark and fearful veil that hides to-morrow!"

She laughed wildly.

"*I* am safe until Sir Hilderbert's Brand returns to its place," she said, mockingly; "and as we leave England for ever to-morrow, and the picture-gallery is immediately to be pulled down, I am safe for an indefinite period."

"Androsia," said the Italian, "is there no quailing in your soul for the deed you bribed me to do? No remorse for the husband you betrayed, and the young girl who lies dead yonder?"

"I glory in it," she said, with a sudden, quiet deadliness of voice and eye; "but it is a new thing for Roncazzi to turn preacher. I distrust and dread you. I know not why."

"But yet you love me, Androsia?" said the Italian, turning his sombre eyes on her.

"Yes," she said, "I have always loved you. Even while I thought I loved Lionel Usher, my heart was always turning to you. You are, you have ever been, my sun and my life."

She knew she was lying, but she cast herself on her knees beside him, and wound her arms round his neck, and smiled her bright, deadly smile into his eyes.

"And you never loved your husband?" he queried, jealously, reading her brilliant face intently.

"No," she said, promptly; "but how often before and since his death have I sworn that to you? He was my golden road to fortune—nothing more. A weak, passionate, loving fool! Bah! his very memory is loathsome to me!"

She spoke the truth now, and he felt it. She looked at him and laughed. She stood up, and widely spread abroad her lovely arms.

"You know my soul," she said; "you know what a loathsome plague-spot it is, and yet you are my very slave! Oh, my beauty, how I adore you, you conquering power!"

He lifted the end of her scarf, and pressed it to his lips.

"Come," he said, "let me remove my disguise, and let me not mock your loveliness with this hoary head."

She looked at him thoughtfully.

"Yes," she said; go into the picture-gallery, and remove your disguise. It would not be safe to do so here. I will come to you, for I long to get rid of this strange haunting feeling that possesses me about you. I wish to see you face to face, my beloved!"

"You shall," he said, and rising, slowly passed through the conservatory, followed by Androsia Grace.

They passed through the writing-cabinet, and so into the picture-gallery, Mrs. Grace lifting a lamp from the writing-table as she passed. The Italian mentioned her to precede him, and as she swept on into the gallery, he stooped and lifted something from behind a bronze statue guarding the door. At the same instant, with a single sweep of his hand, he flung off the false wig and beard, and quietly stepped over the threshold, closing and locking the door behind him.

Mrs. Grace was already at the other end of the corridor, her arm raised as she directed the rays of the alabaster lamp on the empty space formerly occupied by Sir Hilderbert's Brand. Her back was, consequently, towards the Italian, but she heard his approaching step.

"See," she cried, "Sir Hilderbert's Brand is yet unseen, unrestored!" She had told the story, shivering with superstitious dread, to the Italian, and had yet worked her baleful will despite the warning.

"Sir Hilderbert's Brand is here," said her companion.

She turned slowly round, the lamp fell crashing to the ground, and she sank on her knees in the ghastly tide of moonlight, now the sole illumination of the gallery.

Her husband stood before her, Sir Hilderbert's Brand flashing in his grasp!

She knelt dumbly before him, rigid, and wildly beautiful in the white light. There was a silent horror in her dilated eyes, but nothing more, for there was that in the face of Malcolm Grace that forbade appeal, and extinguished hope. Already she felt a black and awful shadow winding round her, already a deadly chill turned her bosom to ice, for she knew that her last hour had come.

Kneeling thus, driving shadows flitting over her from the stormy clouds scudding across the melancholy moon, she heard all. He told her how he had deceived her by his pretended death, and returned to England to build up proof after proof of her faithlessness. He had introduced himself into The Grange and read her summons to his rival. He had taken such steps as to prevent the letter reaching its destination, and answered it in his own person, for he knew that she meditated some dark and terrible deed.

When he came to this, a sudden fire swept through her veins, her eyes glared, and she sprang to her feet. She advanced towards him, furiously.

"You did not dare to rob me of my prey!" she cried, the passion and fury of her hate conquering the deadly spell that had held her.

"Listen!" he said.

The clock in her distant boudoir rang out the hour of twelve.

He counted the strokes, with his eyes holding hers, and a slow smile curved itself round his iron mouth. A sudden blast of wind roared past the windows, tore the clouds from the moon, and sent a flood of frosty light into the gallery.

"At this moment," he said, in the calm, passionless voice in which he had spoken throughout, "Anna Arundel's living, breathing form is clasped in her lover's arms."

She sprang at his throat like a panther, but he caught her in his vice-like grasp, and held her motionless.

"The poison you saw me mingle with the wine she drank as she was leaving your accursed doors was an Eastern drug which possesses the power of inducing a short and harmless, though death-like trance. Accursed woman that you are, your soul is saved the fiery brand of murder."

He had not noticed that her jewelled right hand was creeping slowly towards her bosom, but he saw the hideous smile with which she regarded him, and flung her from him as he would have done a viper. He had purposed at first to kill her, but he had once loved her, and another idea suggested itself to him, as she stood like a furious, beautiful animal, at bay, before him. He pointed to the sea, visible not many hundred paces from the gallery, the graceful form of a yacht dimly seen, poised like a phantom vessel on its slowly heaving bosom, its spread sails catching the uncertain moonlight on their ghostly wings.

"I had meant to kill you," he said, slowly, "but I cannot do it. To-night, you will go with me in that vessel. I shall place you in a convent in Spain, where you can live your life, but which shall be as remorseless a prison to you as the Bastile. Repent there, if such grace should be given you."

She laughed, suddenly, shrilly, loudly, and came a pace nearer, her hand in the bosom of her dress.

"For such a future, I thank you, *thus!*" she said.

She flung herself towards him, with upraised hand, in which something gleamed with the cold blue of steel.

"Stand back!" he cried, raising Sir Hilderbert's Brand which he still held. It was one of those involuntary deeds which men do when their physical forces are seized and guided by some subtle, outside influence.

He swept the heavy blade round in a gleaming circle. It caught her white throat, and the golden head, with its coronal of vine-leaves, rolled at his feet; her headless body fell along the track of moonlight. Her white dress lapped up the crimson stream that ran over the dark floor. A heavy cloud scudded across the moon.

Some twenty years afterwards, when the horrible and mysterious murder of Androsia Grace had become a story to be told shudderingly, round the yule log, and Lord and Lady Usher were elderly people, with sons and daughters growing up round them, Mr. Grace returned to Ivy Grange to die. Soon after the death of his wife, he had written from Greece, contradicting the story of his death, but he had not returned to England until now.

He died, and was buried beside his wife, and with him was buried a small iron casket, soldered and riveted, and which he had ever kept at his side. In future ages, some enthusiastic antiquary will light upon it, and it will be found to contain the skull of a woman, a few decayed pearls, and perhaps, a lock or two of undimmed hair of purest gold—for hair sometimes outlives the decay of ages. He left The Grange estate to Anna, Lady Usher, only stipulating that the picture-gallery should be pulled down, and never rebuilt.

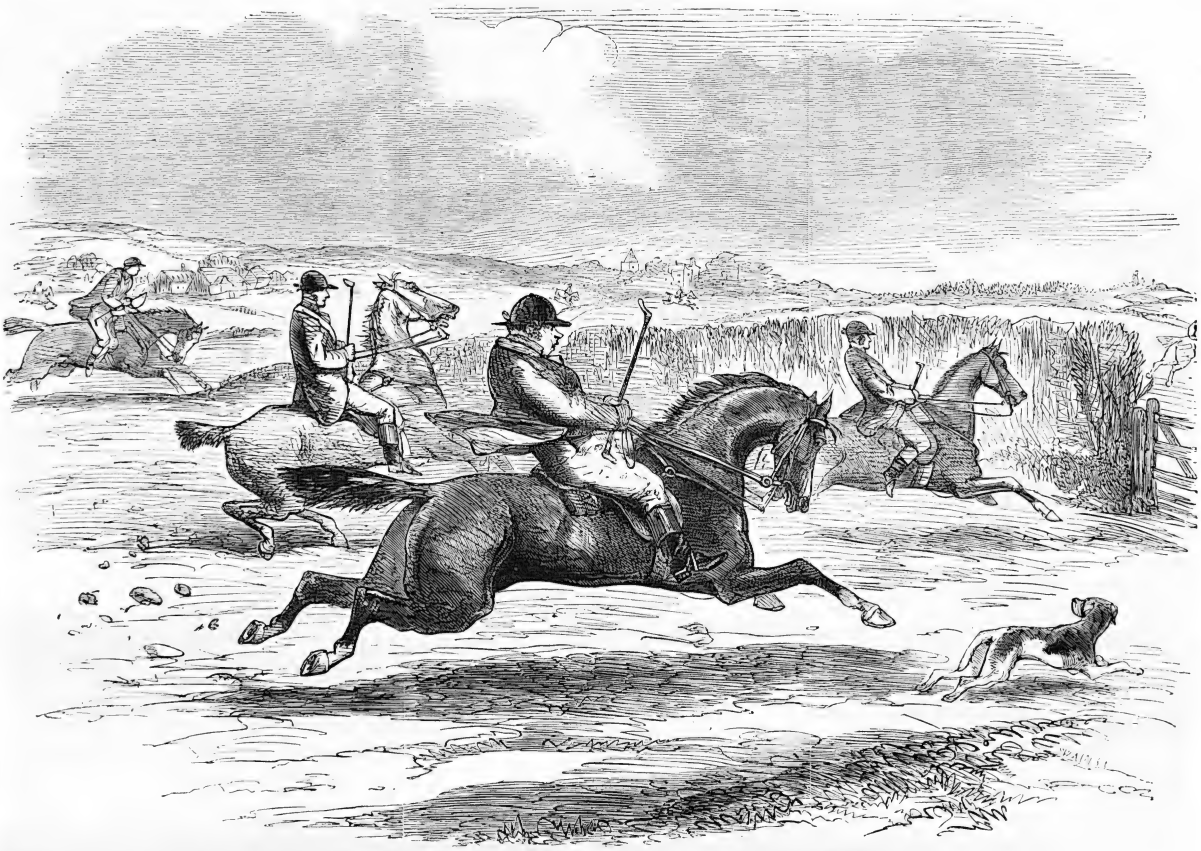
Lady Jane lived to see her son's ring fence carried round The Grange, and, I suppose, rested happier under her monumental marble, in that she had "beheld the desire of her eyes."

The disappearance of Androsia Grace's head, so fearful and mysterious, remained ever unexplained, and, as I have said, it remains for some *savant* of future ages to light upon the true reading of the riddle, should the legend of her fate survive until then.

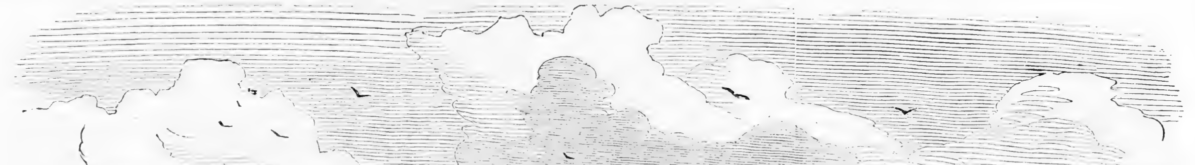
THE END.

It is curious that the oft-repeated sentiment supposed to have been found in the pocket-book of the Claimant in Australia has never been identified. The original lines are to be found in the *Temple Bar* magazine, June, 1862, where Mr. Conyer says, in "Aurora Floyd," "Bless their innocent hearts! I should think fellows with plenty of money and no brains must have been invented for the good of fellows with plenty of brains and no money."

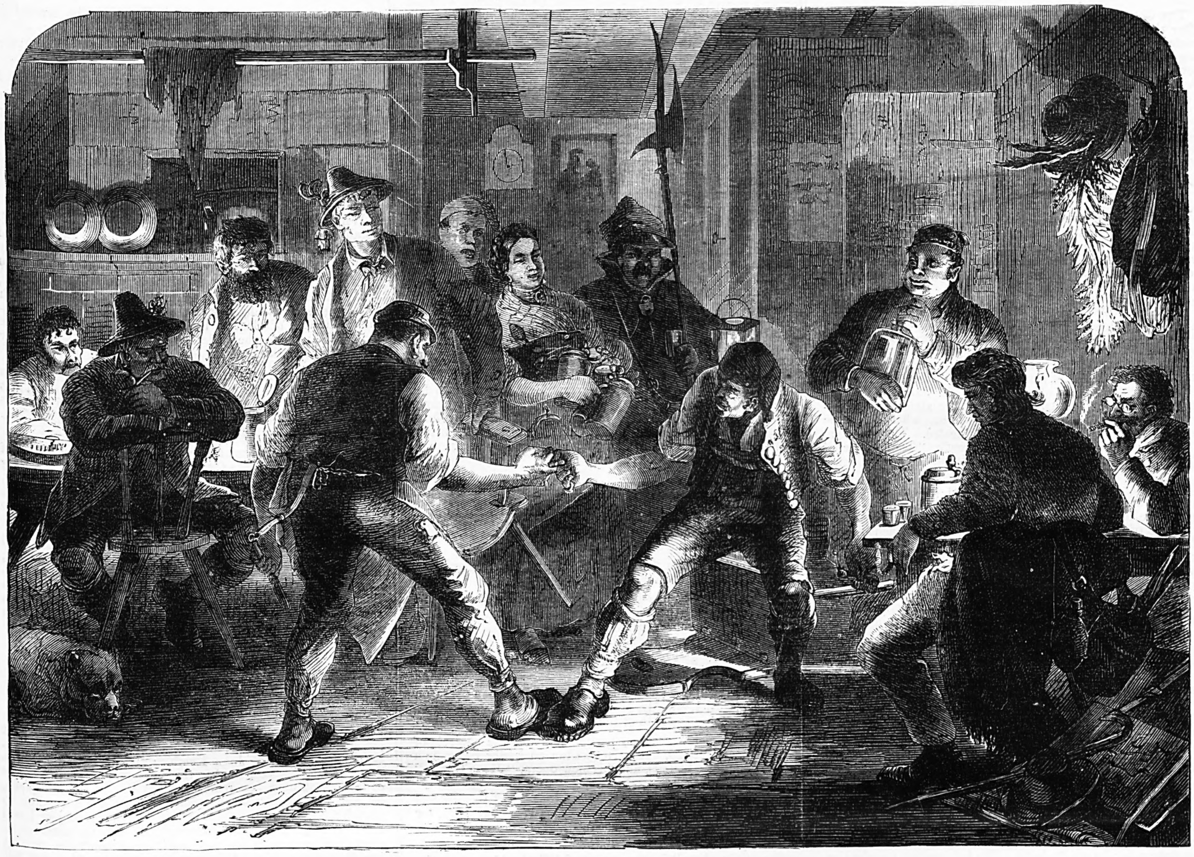
Howard Paul tells a story of Brown's dog, which runs like this:—Brown owned a deep-mouthed animal, which always bayed him welcome home, and snatched mouthfuls of chops out of the legs of strangers. Brown took that faithful animal along with him one day to watch his clothes while he went in swimming. He bathed for an hour, and the dog meanwhile went to sleep on his garments. When Brown came out the dog did not recognize him in his nude condition, and refused to let him come near the garments. Every time Brown would grab for a brace or a sock the dog would bite a mouthful out of his arm or leg, and whenever he made a dive for a boot or an undershirt that animal would seize him by the calf and shake him. So Brown stood there in the sun, pretty nearly roasted, and he spent the afternoon dodging in and out of the water to avoid the female students at the boarding-school, and the factory girls coming down the road. At last, when the dog went to sleep, he crept behind him, caught him suddenly by the tail, and flung him across the stream. Before the dog could swim back, Brown got most of his clothes upon his bleeding body and limbs, and then the dog came sidling up to him, looking as if he expected to be rewarded for his extraordinary vigilance. And yet they say that the dog is man's most faithful friend!



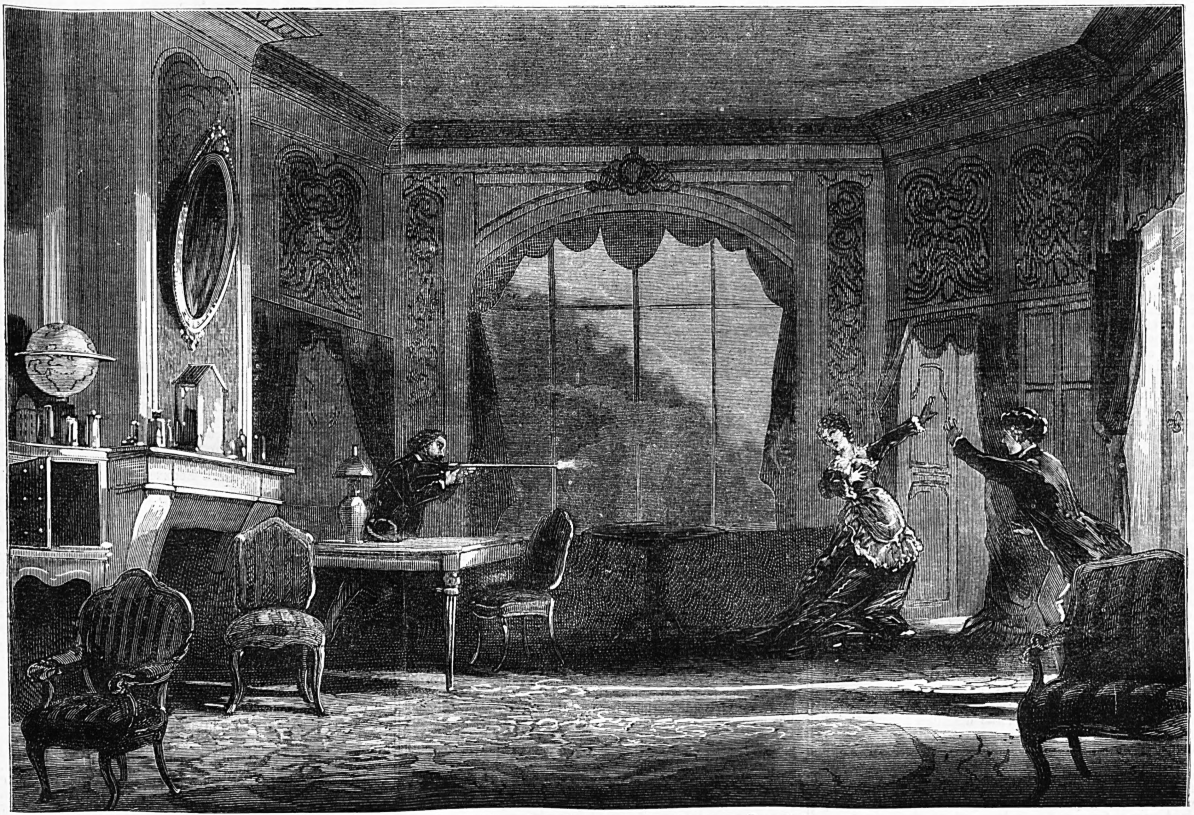
HUNTING SKETCHES (Drawn by Phiz). No. 1.—Too much for the Rider.



HUNTING SKETCHES (Drawn by Phiz). No. 2.—Too much for the Horse.



A WINTER BOUT AT HAKELN.—A Bavarian Athletic Game.



"THE WIFE OF CLAUDE."—Last Scene from M. Alexandre Dumas' Great Drama.

AT THE THEATRES.

The Choral Society, established by M. Gounod immediately after the severance of his connection with the Albert Hall, made its first public appearance in St. James's Hall, on Saturday evening last. Nearly the whole of the programme was devoted to M. Gounod's music, and many of the selections were given for the first time.

The students of Shakspeare will take an especial interest in the embodiment of Hamlet now being presented by Herr Bandmann at the Princess's. Although it cannot be safely said that any new light is thrown upon the text by the present interpreter, it may be yet admitted that the variations from the ordinary reading, and the alterations of the accustomed stage business, help to stimulate the attention, if they do not altogether satisfy the judgment of the auditor. Herr Bandmann, in the interview with the Ghost, the burial of Ophelia, and the final conflict with Laertes, departs from the conventional usages of the stage; but for the restoration of Fortinbras, in the concluding scene, he is to be decidedly commended, and his performance throughout bears evidence of thoughtful study.

The St. James's Theatre reopened on Saturday last, under the rule of the former manager, Mr. Richard Mansell, and with Mr. H. Lewis as responsible sub-lessee—a new title in theatrical life, so far as our experience goes. Translating the said title to mean that Mr. Mansell has had a sufficient experience of the risks of management, and that Mr. H. Lewis is liable for the sinews of war at the St. James's, we may perhaps suggest to that gentleman that the style of entertainment given on Saturday night is by no means what the public have a right to expect in a West-end theatre. The principal reliance seems to be in the *opéra bouffe*, "The Bridge of Sighs," which is now repeated with almost the original cast. Mr. Richard Mansell himself reappears in the character of Malatromba, and we presume does his best; though the amateur rather than the practised actor is suggested the moment he appears on the stage. The St. James's company is in need of being strengthened, and the management should effect some improvement without delay, unless they wish to close their doors again. Mr. George Richardson is the new conductor of the orchestra, which is anything but irreproachable.

A four-act drama, entitled "Passion," was performed for the first time at the Vaudeville last Saturday morning. The explanation of the title is found in the absorbing passion entertained by a young English nobleman, Lord Ernest Mountsorrel, for a fascinating adventuress, who, only known as the Marchioness Daubigny, turns the heads and enslaves the hearts of all the young and old men who come within the sphere of her influence. Partly inflamed by jealousy and partly urged by a chivalric resolve to vindicate her fair fame, which he considers has been unjustly assailed, Lord Mountsorrel slays in a duel his best friend, Major Bruce Fortescue, and when he has discovered the worthlessness of the heartless coquette against whom he has been so earnestly warned, he devotes himself, by way of atonement, to the care of the girl he has rendered an orphan by his wild frenzy. A change of scene from Rome to England takes place, and the later portion of the play exhibits the strong affection of Lord Mountsorrel for his *protegée*, who finally comes to regard her faithful guardian as her future husband. The information supplied by a gipsy girl has enabled him to expose the fashionable adventuress before he quitted Rome, and Lord Mountsorrel now receives, on the eve of his marriage, a visit from the woman he has refused to pardon, which threatens to make Nathalie acquainted with the circumstance that her father was killed by his hand. His lordship now pleads in turn, and, more merciful than her former lover, the woman who had come to gratify her revenge consents to depart with her terrible secret unrevealed. With considerable compression, a more effective termination, and a stronger company to embody the personages of the drama, "Passion" may be seen hereafter under more favourable circumstances; but as now told the story cannot be said to be a pleasant one.

The drama entitled "Old London," now performed at the Queen's Theatre, is an adaptation of "Les Chevaliers du Brouillard," with certain modifications. However, our old-young friend reappears in disguise, and so do all his companions. He is not now Jack Sheppard, but Dick Wastrell; his faithful friend Blueskin is now Old Nollekins; even the historical Jonathan Wild has become Velvet Crawl. It is by complying for the first time with the laws of his country, as represented by the Censor, that Jack has become Dick at the Queen's Theatre. On account of this reformation, no doubt, he is not miserably shot, but receives a free pardon at the end of the play. The outline of "Old London" is the same as that of "Jack Sheppard," but several of the situations are altogether independent of Mr. Ainsworth; and altogether the work is of a much more "spectacular" character than the old Adelphi piece. Dick, reigning as King of the Mint, in the midst of his loyal subjects, male and female, who greatly indulge in dance and song, is an idealized repetition of the Old Cellar, with its "Nix my Dolly;" but an incident which occurred under one of the arches of Old London Bridge is entirely new, and, moreover, gives occasion for a very startling scenic effect. The front of the arch is presented to the audience, and beneath it the river flows rapidly from the back to the front of the stage. Dick appears pushing himself along in a boat to escape the pursuit of Velvet Crawl and Sir Randolph, who are comfortably rowed after him. His strength exhausted, he lands at the footpath beneath the arch, and is then deliberately shot at by his pursuers. Death seems inevitable, when Nollekins appears on the parapet of the bridge, and lets down a rope ladder, which Dick promptly ascends, and thus effects his escape. Sir Randolph follows, but Nollekins cuts the ladder, and thus precipitates him into the river. Another new feature in the piece is the importance given to Dick's mother, who, now sane, now insane, as the author finds convenient, is incessantly at work for the preservation and reformation of her graceless son.

Maggie Dorme, the heroine of the drama produced last week at the Olympic, is a young lady who, under the will of the late Mrs. Chilcott, of Chilcott Hall, has become possessed of a freehold property called Iver's Dean. Her antecedents have been of a miserable kind; she describes herself as "a gutter child," snatched by her benefactress from a life of vice, and converted into an estimable member of society. The meanness of Maggie's origin, however, is not known in the neighbourhood of Iver's Dean. The surviving Chilcotts refrain from questioning her title to the property, and treat her with sufficient politeness. Captain Edward Chilcott, indeed, goes so far as to fall in love with the heiress, who is not insensible to the devotion of the gallant officer. But presently a rival appears upon the scene in the person of Paul Daly, a criminal, who has just escaped from the hulks. He is Maggie's foster-brother, and on the strength of his acquaintance succeeds in extorting large sums of money from her. His nefarious conduct in this respect notwithstanding, Mr. Daly is a passionate lover of his foster-sister. Discovering that her heart has been secured by Captain Chilcott, the escaped convict determines upon destroying her reputation by way of rendering impossible her union with any other than himself. Accordingly he writes anonymous letters to the Chilcott family, accusing Miss Dorme of obtaining possession of Iver's Dean by means of a forged will, and also of compassing the death, by poison, of the late Mrs. Chilcott. Further, he contrives to conceal himself, and to be discovered in Maggie's bed-room. These proceedings on the part of the convict are naturally injurious to the fair fame of Miss Dorme. The Chilcotts hold her in abhorrence, and contemplate handing her over to the officers of justice. Even the captain's love wavers, and his perplexity becomes extreme. In the last scene the leading characters are assembled at a county ball given in the rooms of a rather dilapidated country inn. Paul Daly has gained admission in the guise of an officer in the Greek army. He obtains an interview with Maggie, and urges anew his claims upon her affections. The lady treats him with disdain, and ventures to defy his menaces. Thereupon, Mr. Daly, still bent upon fully demonstrating his excessive passion for his foster-sister, seizes her by the waist and endeavours to hurl her from the window. The balcony upon which he is standing, however, gives way beneath his weight, and he falls lifeless upon the paved courtyard below. Maggie remains safe in the ball-room, and ultimately finds refuge in the arms of Captain Chilcott, Mr. Daly, before expiring, having made full confession of his errors and withdrawn his accusations against her.

DRAMATIC AND MUSICAL GOSSIP.

Bach's "Passion Musik" will be given at St. Paul's Cathedral some time during Lent.

"Babil and Bijou" will be withdrawn at Covent Garden on Saturday, the 1st of March.

Verdi's "Aïda" has been definitely given up at Vienna. The manager of the opera house will not pay the sum demanded for Signor Verdi's expenses.

A new spectacular drama, "Fair Rosamond; or, the Days of the Plantagenets," has been written for Sanger's Amphitheatre by Mr. Akhurst.

Mr. Gye will open Covent Garden with Italian opera on Tuesday, April 1, and Mr. Mapleson will commence his season at Drury-lane on the 15th of the same month.

The Italians are not very particular about the subjects of their opera librettoes, but a Neapolitan composer has gone a little beyond the bounds, and his new opera, "Jesus Christ," has been interdicted.

At Easter the French comedians will leave the Royalty and take up their quarters at the Princess's Theatre, London, for the purpose of producing comedies and *opéra bouffes* now in course of representation in Paris.

The "Poachers" is the name of Offenbach's new *opéra bouffe*. It is very piquant, and the libretto is above the average. The title is singular, and would be an excellent one for most English dramatists.

The new *opéra bouffe* to be produced at the Opéra Comique in a few days is by Offenbach, is to be called "The Bohemians," and has never been performed in England, although it has been rapturously received on the Continent.

Madame Nilsson's singing in "Otello," at St. Petersburg, has produced its usual extravagant effect. She was re-called 30 times during the evening, and received several presents, among others a magnificent tea service, valued at 4000 roubles.

Mdlle. Albani will probably appear before her English admirers in two new characters during the forthcoming operatic season. The parts which she will add to her list of impersonations are those of Ophelia in the "Hamlet" of Ambroise Thomas, and Elvira in Bellini's "Puritani."

One evening recently a series of distressing accidents occurred at the Scala Theatre, Milan. The clothes of a ballet-dancer caught fire, and but for the immediate aid of the scene-shifters she would have been burned alive; a *modiste* fell down the staircase leading to the wardrobe, breaking her leg; a stage assistant fell dead, stricken with apoplexy; and a musician in the orchestra went raving mad, and was forcibly conveyed to the hospital.

After several postponements, the revival of Victor Hugo's "Marion Delorme" has at last taken place at the Théâtre Français. Not only were fabulous prices offered, asked, and given for seats for the first representation of "Marion Delorme," but stories are afloat of boxes having been let for a considerable term, merely or chiefly in order to secure an incontestable right of "assisting" at this great theatrical solemnity. The strange, eventful history of the tragedy has contributed to enhance the interest of the present revival. Read with enthusiasm in presence of a select circle of the poet's friends, accepted with eagerness by the three principal theatres of Paris, it was forbidden by the Censorship in the last year of Charles the Tenth's reign. In 1832, when the more Liberal Government of Louis Philippe removed the interdict, the play was at length produced at the Porte St. Martin. It was long afterwards removed to the stage of the Théâtre Français, for which it was originally destined; but, during the reign of the late Emperor, M. Victor Hugo's plays were prohibited. Alexandre Dumas is fully determined to put a stop to the piracy from which his works and purse have hitherto suffered, and determines that the lessees of the Belgian, Austrian, and Italian theatres shall pay him good prices for the use of his manuscripts. The proprietor of a theatre at Milan wrote to this sensational dramatic author lately, offering him £160 for the right to perform "Claude's Wife" in Italy. The answer was extremely laconic, and set forth that, as Dumas had never received one single farthing from an Italian *impresario* in his life, he had determined not to print his pieces in future till all the excitement consequent upon their production should have subsided, but that, as the manager offered him a sum of money, he would take £320 for a copy of the play, this being the price paid by a director in Vienna. In spite of his resolve never to write for the stage again, he has once more taken a seat at his desk, and is covering quires of paper with what will eventually be a very laughable comedy.

IN LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART.

A marble statue of Dr. Priestley is to be erected at Birmingham.

There is issuing in America an edition of Cardinal Wiseman's works, which will extend to twenty volumes.

Fifty-one vernacular newspapers are at present published in the Bombay Presidency.

Something analogous to *Knife and Fork* has appeared in New York in the *Table*, a monthly publication devoted to the refinements of the table, edited by Barry Gray.

A monument to the poet Campbell is to be erected at Glasgow, his birthplace. If all the Campbells would only give 2s. 6d. a head, it is reckoned that one of the largest monuments in Scotland might be erected.

We understand that it is intended to appropriate a considerable portion of space in the next London International Exhibition, which opens on the 15th of April, to the display of a nearly complete collection of the works of the late John Philip.

Mr. E. M. Ward is painting a picture, the subject of which is an episode in the history of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew—the visit of Charles IX., Catherine de Medici, and the Duke of Anjou to the bedchamber of Admiral Coligni, after his attempted assassination.

A choice collection of engravings after Sir Joshua Reynolds, formed by a gentleman (including 100 proofs in first states by the most celebrated engravers of the time), was disposed of on Monday at the rooms of Messrs. Christie. The prices realized were very high.

There has lately been a sale at the Hôtel Drouot, Paris, of some pictures of the late Cæsar Ducornet, famous for painting without arms. The poor man was armless from his birth, and worked with a brush held in his mouth and feet. His works fetched capital prices. We know some painters who excel the skill of Ducornet, for they paint without heads.

Holman Hunt has completed a new picture, which will probably be exhibited in the approaching show of the Academy, his difference with the Academicians being partly got over. The subject is much the same as that of Millais' "Carpenter's Shed." Joseph's son is resting from his work in his father's carpenter's shed, and as he raises his hands his figure throws the shadow of a cross on the wall.

ON MATTERS THEATRICAL.

TO THE EDITOR OF "PASSING EVENTS."

Sir,—I am not the typical "Old Playgoer." I do not remember Edmund Kean, and I have not the faintest conception of the acting of John Kemble; but I have taken the Drama as it comes for the last thirty years, and therefore feel equal to making a few remarks about it. In the first place, let me reassure you by the remark that I am not going to preach a homily over its decadence. That is a subject I will leave to other pens, contenting myself with the observation that Shakspeare does not appear to "spell ruin" just now at the Princess's. No, sir, I do not lament over the past, but more with the age; I can enjoy a burlesque and set out an *opéra bouffe*. There is only one thing I pray to be delivered from, and that is a drama of modern life—they are so true, so painfully true, to Nature and Society.

As to the bad acting of the present day of which we hear so much, there is some foundation for the complaints uttered. Economical managers, having secured a "star" to draw houses, are in the habit, with an eye to increased profit, of surrounding him or her by a mere bundle of "sticks" which refuse to kindle to enthusiasm at his or her contact. Women, too, whose sole attraction lies in their outward appearance, are allowed to flaunt their paint, padding, and nudity before an audience to the exclusion of their more talented but less prepossessing sisters. But then this must be; for if Lord Duxandrakes, having more money than he could otherwise get rid of, chooses to take a theatre—in some-one else's name of course—for his own private amusement, and not for the elevation of the public sentiment, he certainly has a right to put whom he likes upon its stage. If the public do not sympathise with his efforts they can stay away.

But what, by the way, is to be said of the amateur manager, who thinks that he can make a theatre a business concern, and—Heaven save the mark!—a paying one?—who boldly puts his name on the bills, and thereby invites a host of sharks to batten on his inexperience and incompetence?—who gets taken in and done for by those around him, and who in turn tries to take in and do for the public that he disgusts by his blunders?—who sometimes goes so far as to combine amateur acting with amateur management, thereby increasing the bitter debt owed him by suffering humanity, but whose ideas are generally limited to getting up in elaborate evening toilette, standing drinks in the saloon to his friends, and inviting his ballet to supper? He fosters bad acting and worse pieces from sheer ignorance, for the gift of judgment in things theatrical is one given to but few, and is usually only attainable by long experience.

Your Eccentric Correspondent.

P.S.—There is a minor matter to which I wish to devote a few lines. Why should words supposed to be of a particularly interesting and expressive nature be uttered on the stage to the accompaniment of sundry instrumentally evolved, sounds denominated "slow music?" I can just conceive this music being performed during a prolonged piece of dumb show, to break the jar that would otherwise be caused by sudden silence. But, cannot the hero be made acquainted with the secret of his birth, or the heroine receive her dying father's blessing; cannot the villain's treachery be unmasked, or his triumph expressed without the inevitable transpontine rum-tum-tiddy, and this on stages that profess to hold the mirror up to Nature? The result is simply this: that the elocution of the actor is in a great measure lost, and his words thereby deprived of much of their power. This practice has very much increased of late, and I can now only hope it will not spread beyond the theatre, as it has done in America. There it has extended to the church, it being now the custom at fashionable places of worship to follow words of specially pathetic or rhetorical effect with a low orchestral accompaniment from the organ. I have even heard of weddings, where the solemn questioning by the minister of the groom and the bride, and even his final benediction, was thus set off by a dramatic background of low music.

IN COURT.

THE ALLEGED FRAUDS BY A BANKER.

ON Wednesday, the 5th inst., Robert C. M. Bowles, a partner in the firm of Bowles Brothers, lately carrying on business as bankers at 449, Strand, surrendered at the Old Bailey, to take his trial on an indictment charging him with unlawfully pledging and converting to his own use and that of the firm 200 Lombardo-Venetian railway bonds, which had been deposited with the firm for a particular purpose. He was also charged with unlawfully dealing with other securities, which had been deposited for safe custody. The prosecutors were Messrs. D'Agiout, *père* and *fils*, bankers of Naples, and it appeared that in the beginning of 1871 they were anxious to have London correspondents to meet their acceptances. With that view they entered into negotiations with Messrs. Bowles Brothers, and in the month of March an agreement was drawn up, by which the latter were to pay drafts on London, to meet which money was to be transmitted from time to time by Messrs. D'Agiout, and they deposited as collateral security 200 Lombardo-Venetian railway bonds, of the value of £2,200. In November last the prosecutors learned that Messrs. Bowles Brothers had stopped payment, and thereupon Mr. D'Agiout the younger came to this country to obtain possession of the bonds. He saw the defendant, who professed to know nothing about the financial part of the business of his firm, stating that his duty was to attend to the reading-room connected with the bank, and to map out routes for American customers who visited Europe. It turned out that the bonds had been pledged at the Union bank for advances, and Mr. D'Agiout then took out a warrant against the defendant, who was the only partner in the house then remaining in London. An inquiry took place, and it was ascertained that securities which had been deposited for safe custody by Mr. Robert Gardiner, a retired commissary-general, a lady named Gates, and other persons, had also been made use of in a similar manner. Evidence was given at considerable length, and it appeared that the firm suspended payment on November 9th last, and their liabilities were £80,000, and the assets £3,500. The securities pledged with the Union Bank against which Messrs. Bowles had no lien, amounted to £12,128. That did not include Messrs. D'Agiout's bonds, because on the current account there was a balance of £171 against Messrs. D'Agiout. The parties in the house were Charles, Robert, and W. Bowles, H. Stetson, and N. Appleton. The drawings by the London partners were debited to "salary" and "entertainment" accounts. The salary account from January to November, 1872, amounted to £2,786, and the entertainment account to £1,673, including £232 paid to Mr. Keith. Mr. Brown, managing clerk to Messrs. Turquand, Young & Co., stated in cross-examination that his firm had only investigated the London books, and that there was a claim by the London house against the Boston house of £80,000.

At the close of the evidence for the prosecution, Mr. Metcalfe submitted that there was no case to go to the jury, inasmuch as it was not shown that any of the securities in question had been lodged with the Union Bank by the defendant, and he urged that the defendant could not be made responsible criminally for the acts of other persons. After some legal argument, the Deputy-Recorder held that there was no evidence connecting the defendant with the transactions in question, and he therefore did not think there was any necessity for troubling the jury. He did not doubt that a great wrong had been done to the prosecutors, but in a criminal case there must be a guilty mind on the part of the accused, and that was not shown here. The jury then returned a verdict of "Not guilty," and defendant was discharged.

READE V. THE SOCIETY OF LICENSED VICTUALLERS.

The Attorney-General and Mr. J. O. Griffits were for the plaintiff; Mr. Digby Seymour, Q.C., and Mr. Barnard for the defendants.

This was an action brought by Mr. Charles Reade, the well-known author, against the defendants, who acknowledged their liability as proprietors of the *Morning Advertiser* newspaper, to recover damages for an alleged libel which appeared in that paper in the month of April, 1872. In his opening the learned Attorney-General stated that on the 1st of April last a comedy entitled "Shilly Shally," founded upon a novel, written by Mr. Anthony Trollope, called "Ralph the Heir," was produced at the Gaiety Theatre. On the 2nd of April a *critique* of the play appeared in the *Morning Advertiser*, and of certain passages in that article Mr. Reade now complained, alleging that they were libellous in that they imputed to his work indecency, and went beyond the limits of fair criticism. The defendants pleaded not guilty, and contended that their critic was not actuated by any improper motives; that the play had struck him as being indecent, and he had said so in the fair spirit of criticism, and without any personal malice. The article complained of was read *in extenso* by the Attorney-General. The declaration pointed only to the passage in which Mr. Neefit says that he has been working for his daughter for thirty years. Polly objects that she is only twenty-two. Neefit replies, "I worked for you long 'afore you were born;" but it was urged that the article imputed to Mr. Reade that he had written an indelicate play, or at all events a play containing very indelicate passages.

The learned Attorney-General having opened the case, called

Mr. Charles Reade, who said that he was a Doctor of Civil Law, a Fellow of Magdalen, Oxford, and a barrister of Lincoln's-inn. In the course of his examination, which was very short, he said that he had written about 17 stories and perhaps as many dramas; but with reference to the passages complained of by the *Morning Advertiser* nothing indecent was meant, nor could he see anything indecent in them.

In his cross-examination by Mr. Seymour, he was asked as to his opinion of the indecency of several portions of the play, such as "Turns like butter when you get her by the briny." "The result was our Polly." "Heaven's the word now, not 'ell." "He must take her in her smock," followed by the reply, "He would not desire anything better," and other passages which were said to be indecent. He was further cross-examined as to his knowledge, personal and otherwise, of several eminent critics whose names were mentioned; but the result of this portion of his evidence was that he was of opinion that some papers are more fair than others, but that in certain journals the dramatic column is very corrupt. Mr. Reade further gave it as his opinion that playwrights ought not to be dramatic critics. In re-examination, he said that he had softened down many passages in Mr. Trollope's novel, but the Lord Chief Justice observed that this had nothing to do with the question.

In his speech to the jury, Mr. Seymour commented upon the fact that Mr. Reade, by his attorney, had accused the *Morning Advertiser* of making one in a "trade confederacy, acting on private instructions," and that so the proprietors were bound to see their critic clear, and to fight the battle for him. The critic had given a fair opinion on the play; he thought it indecent, and he was obliged to say so.

Colonel A. B. Richards was called, and said: I am the editor of the *Morning Advertiser*. Mr. Lee was theatrical critic of that paper in April last. I gave him no instructions whatever as to the nature of the criticisms he should send. I gave no instructions whatever as to the article in question. I had not read "Ralph the Heir" or "Shilly Shally." When I saw the word "indecency," I handed the proof to a gentleman, and said, "I think we had better have nothing to do with this;" and I believe he struck out certain passages. I did not do that because I thought it libellous. I had no ill-feeling whatever against Mr. Reade.

Cross-examined: I am an author myself, and have written various things. I wrote the novel "So Very Human." There was a criminal information against me for libel on account of that book, and I paid £50 to settle it. I wrote the drama "Cromwell." Mr. Lee joined the paper after I became editor. He is a writer of plays.

Was the criticism much stronger when it was first brought to you?—There was more of that same kind of comment. I think the incident as to "our Polly" was mentioned originally. Mr. Lee is not still upon the *Advertiser*. He gave it up in August last.

Mr. Richard Lee: I am an author of plays, and I have written articles in the public press. I have been a public writer for five or six years. I never saw Mr. Reade but once until to-day. I have never been brought into conflict with him in any way, and there was nothing to bias my judgment in reference to him. I became dramatic critic of the *Morning Advertiser* in December, 1870, when Colonel Richards became editor. I was present on the first night of "Shilly Shally." I heard and saw the performance, and the effect of the play upon the various parts of the audience. I had no instructions from Colonel Richards or anybody else as to what I should write on that occasion or any other. I left the theatre without speaking to any other of my brother critics, and hurried down to the office and at once wrote the criticism. I produce the article as I wrote it. The only excisions from it were passages from the play itself, which were considered so gross that they could not appear. No comments of my own were struck out. The excisions were made in my absence. I handed in my "copy" when it was finished, and left the office. I heard myself the passages I quoted spoken. There was no loud expression of disapprobation, though there were some not loud. I wrote my honest conviction. I was shocked myself at what I heard, and the way in which it was uttered. I did not hear the judgment or opinion of any one else upon the passages before I conceived my own I wrote from my own conviction as a playgoer of twenty-five years' standing. What I wrote was purely and only the product of my own mind. I utterly repudiate what Mr. Reade said about combination between me and my brethren. It is simply impossible.

Cross-examined: I have written several plays, but from circumstances only one has been played. Others have been offered and refused. I believe at the opening of the Gaiety I sent a comedy there; but that was years before this article—two or three years before. I had offered "Odeal by Touch" at the Gaiety. It was not accepted. I have no knowledge of any play of Mr. Reade's being accepted there about that time. "Odeal by Touch" was afterwards played. I had not read "Ralph the Heir."

Then what you did was in the performance of a high public duty?—Of a duty; I don't say "high." I believe that I took down the words uttered on the stage accurately. I am not now upon any newspapers. I am still writing or polishing up plays that I have written. I have altogether written eight or nine plays. Only one has been played.

The Attorney-General: I hope some more will be received.

Witness: Thank you. (A laugh.)

His Lordship, in summing up, directed the jury that it was their duty, looking at all the circumstances, to say whether the article in question was libellous, and if they answered that question in the affirmative, what damages they would award.

The jury, after considering the matter for twenty minutes, found for the plaintiff, damages £200.

DOURY V. WHITWORTH.

This action was brought before the Court of Queen's Bench by the plaintiff, a captain in the French Army, against the defendant, Sir Joseph Whitworth, inventor and manufacturer of rifled artillery, to recover commission on the sale of guns to the French Government during the late war. Defendant pleaded never indebted, and payment.

It appeared from the statement of the case that the plaintiff, who had studied civil and military engineering, was in the year 1867 at the Universal Exhibition at Paris, at which defendant was an exhibitor of rifled ordnance. Plaintiff there made the acquaintance of Mr. Hoyle, the agent of the Whitworth Company (Limited). He also became acquainted with Sir Joseph Whitworth, and in 1870 became the agent of the company in Paris, at a salary of £100 and an allowance of £50 for an office in which to exhibit the articles manufactured by the company. He was also to receive a commission at the rate of five per cent. on the amount of money paid on account of orders for rifled ordnance and other guns and military machinery. Down to the end of July, 1871, when his connection with the company ceased, he laboured incessantly in the interests of the defendant. He was paid commission on various orders, but with respect to a very large order received from the French Government, the parties were unable to agree to terms. Plaintiff was acquainted with General Lebœuf, who became War Minister, and through his influence he obtained a trial of the Whitworth ordnance at Satory and the Camp of Châlons—the Emperor being present at the latter trial. From an early copy of the report as to the result of the trials in question, which plaintiff obtained through the influence of General Lebœuf, it appeared that they were entirely successful. The war broke out in July, 1870, and in the following September a new Government—called the Government of the National Defence—was established in Paris. Previous to the war the plaintiff, at the special desire of the Emperor, made a report in respect of the Whitworth gun, and he was sent by General Trochu on a special mission to England to purchase 1,000 guns. The defendant's company undertook to supply the guns at the rate of twenty-five per week at £65 each, and for 15 per cent. more to deliver them at the rate of fifty per week, the first delivery to be made within six weeks. The plaintiff was to receive 5 per cent. commission on the amounts received. This order was, however, never executed, but for what reason plaintiff was never able to ascertain. Plaintiff was instrumental in obtaining for Sir Joseph Whitworth the decoration of the Legion of Honour. He (plaintiff) and his family were in Paris during the siege. Communication was effected with the Government at Tours by balloon post. Plaintiff, by that means, wrote twice to Mr. Hoyle, the agent of defendant's company. In one letter he said, "We are going on well, and as to the W. affair you will probably receive news from Tours." The second letter left Paris on the 1st of November, 1870, and was delivered at Manchester on the 5th of the same month. It said, "I hope you have received and are receiving arms at Tours, and that small arms are continuing to be supplied at Châlons." Mr. Hoyle was about to proceed, in consequence of this letter, to Tours, and communicate with M. Gambetta, who had succeeded in escaping by balloon from Paris, when he met M. Marten, the agent of the Tours Government, in London. He subsequently proceeded to Tours, and negotiated the order, the subject of the action, and the foundation of which had been laid by the plaintiff, who would himself have transacted the business, but that he was besieged in Paris. The order was for twenty-four 3lb. battery guns, and twenty-four 12lb. battery guns, and other arms, and the contract was signed by M. Marten in London, and was subsequently, to a certain extent, carried out. Plaintiff had no means of knowing how many guns were supplied, but he knew that twenty-four battery guns—twelve of each size—were furnished.

Before plaintiff's examination-in-chief had concluded, a conference took place between the learned counsel on both sides, at the close of which

Mr. H. James said that Sir Joseph Whitworth had been for some time suffering from ill-health, and the communications with the plaintiff took place through Mr. Hoyle. Defendant had been under the impression that the order in question had been obtained not through the plaintiff, but through M. Marten. There was a misunderstanding on the subject; but after what had been stated, the defendant, through him (Mr. H. James), unreservedly withdrew the imputation which the plaintiff considered rested upon his honour as an officer and a gentleman, and was ready to agree to a verdict being entered for £2,200.

Mr. Serjeant Parry, on the part of the plaintiff, accepted the statement and the offer made by his learned friend.

THE TWIN CATS.

An interesting case arising out of mistaken identity came before Sheriff Cheyne in the Dundee Small Debt Court a few days ago. It seems that there are two cats in Dundee—"Tom" and "Jack"—so exactly alike that it is almost impossible even for those most intimately acquainted with the animals to distinguish one from the other. Hence arose a serious and complicated disturbance between their owners, as shown by the following claim, on which the action was laid:—"Robert Gillan, spirit dealer, 208, Overgate, Dundee, to Robert M'Kenzie, coachman, Small's Wynd, Dundee, December, 4, 1872.—You having without cause sent your shopman, and afterwards come yourself, and violently attacked and assaulted me this day on the public street—viz. the Overgate-street of Dundee—and there slandered me by falsely, injuriously, and calumniously calling me a thief and other opprobrious names, and by force took from me my cat, all in the presence of Alexander M'Lennan, Nethergate, and John Gillespie, Green Market, Dundee, and others, whereby I have greatly suffered in my person, feelings, and character. To damages sustained (£6) and as solatium due to (£6) me in the premises, £12." The cats, it should be explained, are of the same sex, both of the tiger species, and both marked with the same identical stripes and spots. M'Kenzie the pursuer's cat is "Tom," and the defender Gillan's cat is "Jack." On the occasion when the lamentable dispute occurred Gillan's shopman observed M'Kenzie with, as he thought, his employer's cat "Jack" under his arm, and immediately claimed the animal. M'Kenzie declared it was his own cat "Tom," and refused to give up possession, upon which the shopman hurried to the shop and informed Gillan of the matter. Gillan thereupon went after M'Kenzie, and forcibly taking the cat from him, brought it home, where to his astonishment he found his own cat "Jack." He therefore allowed "Tom," to go, and the sagacious beast having taken shelter in a cellar, the tenant, thinking it was Gillan's cat, took it again to his shop. In the meantime M'Kenzie, in search of "Tom," also came to the shop, and seeing "Jack" there, insisted upon taking him, under the mistaken impression that he was "Tom." Hence arose the disturbance which led to the action. After much discussion by counsel, during which an offer was made by M'Kenzie to give an apology and to tender half-a-guinea in name of damages with small debt costs, the sheriff held that this tender was sufficient, and gave decree accordingly. A happy conclusion to a most bewildering difficulty.

A BRUTE.

William May, a substantial farmer, of Week St. Mary parish, was summoned before the magistrates at Stratton to show cause why he should not support his aged mother, now in the workhouse, by whom he had been brought up. The defendant's solicitor admitted the relationship, and that defendant was possessed of ample pecuniary means, but defied the magistrates to enforce payment, because his birth occurred before his mother's marriage to his father. This he proved by marriage certificate produced on subpœna, and by the admission of the poor old woman herself, who was put in the witness-box. The defendant was interrogated as to whether he paid succession duty as a nephew or a stranger when he inherited his uncle's property, but this he declined to answer. He left the court amid howls of indignation, but not without having demonstrated that the law upheld him in his refusal to pay towards the support of his aged mother either in or out of the workhouse.

THE "NORTHFLEET" DISASTER.

An appearance has been entered to the action in the Court of Admiralty on the part of the owners of the *Murillo*, under protest, and the case will proceed on petition. The suit was instituted for £14,000 by the owners of the *Northfleet*, and a citation was issued, on which an appearance has now been entered.

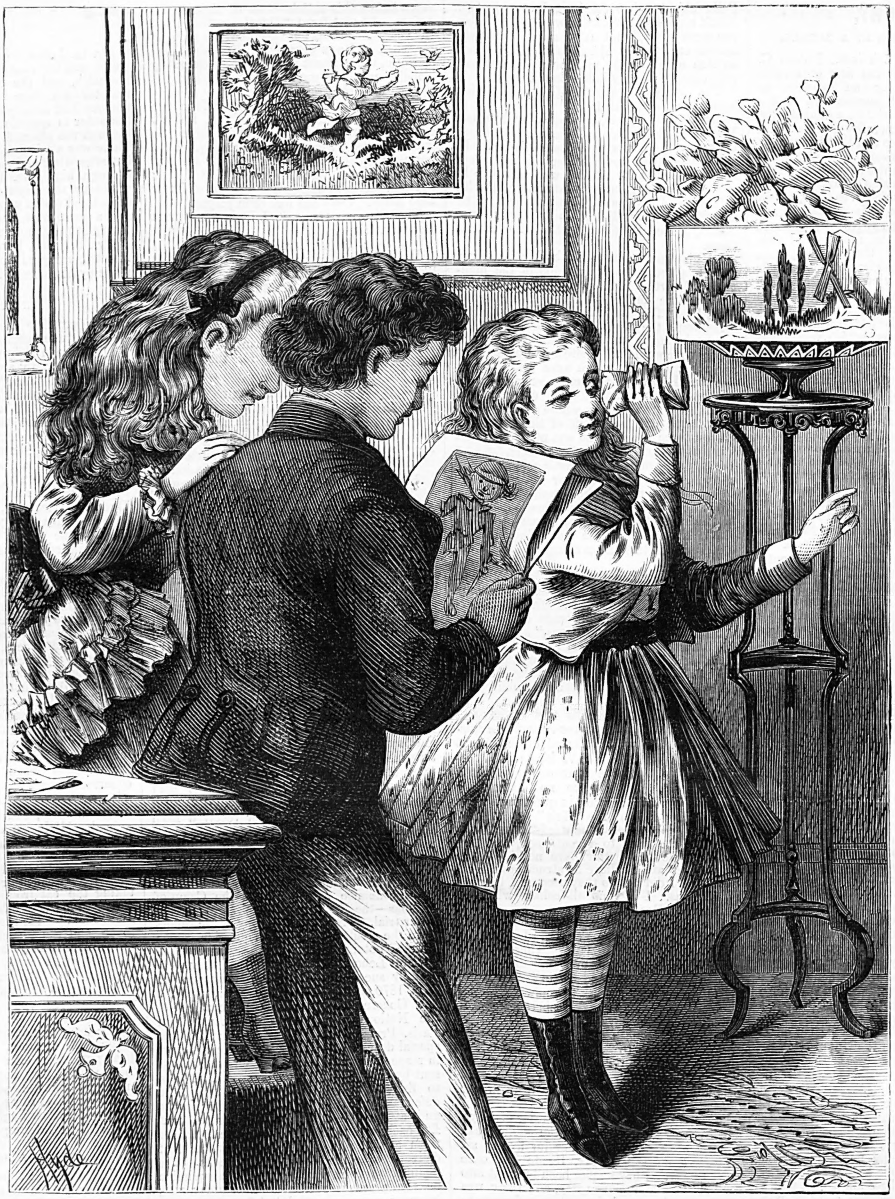
TO CONSUMPTIVES.—A GRATEFUL FATHER is desirous of sending by mail, free of charge to all who wish it, a copy of the prescription by which his daughter was restored to perfect health from confirmed consumption, after having been given up by her physicians and despaired of by her father, a well-known physician, who has now discontinued practice. Sent to any person free. Address, O. P. BROWN, Secretary, 2, King-street, Covent-garden, London.

VALENTINE'S DAY.

You wonder who sent it! Well I suppose you do, my young friend. But let me assure you that there is nothing at all novel in the fact of your wondering. Valentines are merely a kind of puzzle, and, setting aside the gratification which young ladies may experience on being honoured with such marks of attention, the greater part of the pleasure derived from their receipt lies in guessing the name of the sender. In your case, my boy, this little piece of mental exercise is likely to prove the whole pleasure; for the uncomplimentary looking missive you have received can hardly be expected to arouse feelings of joy within your breast. Seek consolation, therefore, from your sympathizing sister, who is leaning upon your shoulder, and who, apparently, not having a valentine herself, will be pleased enough to talk with you about yours. So confer with her as to whether this insulting portrait comes from Bob Walker, whose head you punched last Thursday; or from Tommy Gibbs, whom you cleaned out at marbles the week before, and whose (late) pet alley is at the present moment in your right-hand trouser pocket, in company with other odds and ends too numerous to mention; or from that spiteful cat, Jane Tabbishaw, who hates boys, and who has a special spite against you ever since you lamed her nasty little beast of a dog with a stone from your catapult, and quite accidentally, of course, for did not you offer her two apples and a lump of hardbake in compensation?

As for you, little Missy, I see you are early developing that habit peculiar to your sex which consists in minutely inspecting a letter or parcel in every conceivable manner before opening it, in order to indulge in surmises as to its possible contents. You prefer to peep into the cracks of your valentine, and take flying snatches at its treasures, to pulling it open at once and laying it bare before you. Well, as I said before, there are many older and presumably wiser than yourself who indulge in the same innocent if absurd amusement.

Well, go on puzzling your little heads about it as much as you like. I am not going to inflict upon you the reason why Saint Valentine's Day is kept. It is not from me that you will learn that he was or was not a Bishop of the early Christian Church, nor how, why, when, and where he suffered martyrdom. Neither do I intend to enlighten your little minds as to the Old English custom of looking out of the window at early dawn and choosing the first person you see as your valentine, for that practice might lead to your tumbling out and breaking your neck. No, I will just leave you to "wonder who sent it."



ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.——"I Wonder Who Sent It!"

A French statesman some time ago inquired of Prince Bismarck why he always wore his military uniform, which must be inconvenient to him. "Because," replied the Prince, "it saves me the necessity of changing my dress four times a day—that is, one hour a day, two and a-half days in a month, and a month in a year."

A satirical clergyman says it is curious to note how many people attend a circus "only because they want to please their children; but still more curious to observe that in many instances it takes two or three able-bodied men, with as many women, to look after one little boy or girl."

THEATRE ROYAL, DRURY LANE. Sole Lessee and Manager, F. B. Chatterton. This Evening, and until further Notice, at 7, THE TALE OF A COMET. At 7.45, CHILDREN IN THE WOOD. Characters by the celebrated Vokes Family, Miss Coveney, Violet Cameron, L. Russell, May Hamilton: double harlequinade, two harlequins, two clowns, two pantaloons; Messrs. Mead, Powell, Ford, Johnstone, Rignold, Lickford, &c.

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